

# Erasmus of Roterodame to the

FOL. 1.

Ryght reuerende Bysshop and mooste excellent  
Prynce of Traiecte/Philip of Bur-  
gundye/ sendeth gretyng.



**A**lbeit in these monethes / feldes lye here  
and there bare and barren, mooste honourable prelate, yet  
there is no tyme of the yeare but the feloes of learyng  
byng for the one profytable croppe or other: so that there  
is none so rugged a wynter, but some profyte aryleth of  
the feldes wherin good studyes are sowed. He thynketh  
it standeth with indyfferent reason than, that a great por-  
cion should be cut therout and geuen to the Bysshop as the  
chiefe ploughman of this husbandrye. For whete to oure powers we laye oute  
helpyng handes to the furtheraunce of the gospel, we in some parte serue the  
turnes of the office that you ought to care for. In consyderacion wherof I haue  
doen this so muche the more wyllynglye, because the Argument of this matter  
selke prouoked me therunto. For I haue expounded by waye of Paraphrase,  
the two epistles of Saint Paule to Tymothee, and the one to Titus: wherun-  
to I haue added, as it were in stedde of a perfyte ende, that, that he wrote to  
Philemon, because it should not be lefte alone vndo, being the hyndermoost,  
which though it treat not of lyke matter as these other doe, yet there is nothing  
in Paules wytyng, that pertaineth not to the offyce of a byshop. For in these  
three former Epistles he paynteth out after a wondrefull maner and setteth  
for the ymage of a righte and a true Christian prelate: and what qualy-  
ties and gyftes it behoueth him to be garnyshed withall that is called to this so  
arduous a traual, and what his dueties are to doe that taketh that offyce in  
hande. For how harde a matter it is, to playe the partes of a blameles byshop,  
and on the other syde, howe pernicious a daungier it is to the ordyng of man-  
nes lyfe, to haue a corrupte keper of the lordes flocke, it is euidentlye apperaunt  
in that, that Paule geueth commaundement of no thing moze instauntlye nor  
moze carefullye than he doeth of it. For howe often reheatral maketh he of alwaye  
one thing, and howe often beateh he in the same matters that he spake of afore:  
howe many tymes doeth he beseeche, charge, and aduise by al that holy is, nowe  
by sayre speache nowe by promyses, nowe by feare alluryng the people with the  
example somtyme of himselfe and somtyme of Christ: Nowe seying Paule was  
so afrayed of their quaylyng, whome he had instructed by his owne teachinge,  
whome also he had ordayned by the layyng on of his owne handes, & had sear-  
ched and througely tryed their faithfulnes and integritie by so many maner of  
wayes: howe muche moze daungier is it at this daye to committe an office of so  
weyghty importaunce vnto any man at auenture without good aduise-  
ment? In tymes past euery citie had a resident byshop of his owne, and yet in those ci-  
ties howe small a porcion of folkes were there that professed Christe?

AAA. i. And

And belydes that, in those dayes the bloude of Christ was yet in feruent remembrance in mennes hartes, because it was but lately shedde. And the heauely fyre that was geuen men in baptysme, was yet stampng hote: whiche thinges I can not tell howe, they bothe seme to be colde at this present in our conuersaciō. For these causes sake, a Byshop had not onely the charge and ouersyght of a fewer than nowe, but also of suche as were obedyent without compulsion. We thinke it therefore, a matter of muche moze dyfficultie, at this daye to playe the faithfull vncorrupte byshop: not onely for that, that one man hath the autoritie ouer so many townes, but muche moze in that the moost parte of them ouer and belydes the dyspensacion and teaching of the gospell, whiche is the chiefest and the very peculiar office of a Byshop, are burthened with the administration of seculare offices. But it is a wondrous matter to talke of, how euill the worlde and Christ agree one with the other, and how harde a thinge it is for heauenly busynes and worldly affaires to be at one conuoyde. Than seyng it is a great weyghte matter to doe either of them bothe as it should be, that is to saye, eyther to be a good byshop or a profytable pynce: what a busye piece of worke is it for a man that is tangled bothe the wayes, so to ordre the matter, that he leaue no parte of his office vndone, eyther touching his spiritual charge or his tempozall autoritie: so to content his mortall pynce, that he offende not the pynce immortall: and so to be in fauour w<sup>th</sup> the courte, that he come not out of fauour in heauen: In tymes past who soeuer toke the office of a byshop vpon him, must out of hande haue prepared him selfe wyllynglye to abyde al sortes of persecuciōs. And yet it passeth my knowledge to saye whether there be moze daungier in the tranquillitie of the worlde that now goeth, in case it be a tranquillitie, or in the storme tempestes of those dayes. And althoughe by reason of altring the state of thinges, it is not possible that the maner of vsynge a byshoppes office should be thoroughly in al thinges alwayes after one sorte. And yet the thing is not to be vtterly condemned that varieth from the example of that age, nether the mutable changeinges of humayne matters. Doe alwayes permitte a byshop to bynge to passe the thing that he thinketh best to be doene: lyke as a Mastre of a shyp that is bothe experte and vigilaunt doeth no good somtymes with sitting at the helme, but is caried awaye as the wynde and whether wylly: yet not withstandynge he shall goe the lesse out of the waye, from the sincere persyte image of a good byshop, that wylly haue this forme of Paule, as it were a certayne directorie alwayes before his eyes. Lyke as a stoute gouernour of a shyppe, albeit he be dyuen parforce to goe somtyme a great deale out of his right course, doeth not set his eye belydes the compasse and loode sterre for all that, lest he should chaunce to goe quyte out of his ayme all together. And althoughe a man can not doe as Paule did in al thinges, yet it is somewhat if he folowe his example in some thinges. And who so wylly endeuour himselfe to those thinges that are the best to be doene, shall not faile of the forewardnes of Christes helpe, whose vicegerent your lordshipp is, and without his helpe all that men goeth aboute is but vayne. fare ye well.

The yere, M. D. LXX.

# The Argument vpon the first fol. 16

Epistle of S. Paule vnto Tymothie/by D.  
Erasmus of Roterodame.



Tymothies mother was a Iewe boyme, howbeit she was a christian, and his father was a Greke. This Timothee being an honest manerly towarde yonge man and well learned in holy scriptures Paule chosed to be a minstre: and yet bycause of þe Iewes he was compelled to circuncide him. And forasmuch as he had committed vnto Tymothie (as he dyd also to Titus) the cure of those congregacions that he coulde not goe to himselfe, he instituted him in the office of a byshop and in the dyscipline of the congregacion, geuing him not admonicions as a dysciple, but as a sonne and as a felowe in office. And to thintent he might doe so with the moze auctoritie, he doeth often vindicate the auctoritie of Apostleship vnto him selfe. Paule admonisheth hym to reiecte suche as woulde byynge in Jewyshe fables, and to teache those thinges that pertaine to faith and charitie. Than, forasmuche as þe ordre of a citie and tranquillitie of a commune wealth dependeth of the auctoritie of princes and magistrates, he woulde not onely not haue their auctoritie (though they were Ethnykes) contemned of the Christians, but also commaundeth them to be prayed for. He prescribeth what is comely bothe for men and for women to vse in the open congregacion. He paynteth out what a byshop shoulde be and his householde. These he treateth of almost in al the three firste Chapiters. Than he warneth him that he receaue no Jewyshe fables, and speaketh of choyle of meates and forbyddyng of mariage. And than he teacheth him straightwaies how he shoulde behaue himselfe towardes olde men, towardes yongmen, towardes olde women, towardes yongwomen, towardes wydowes as well riche and poore as those that ought to be founde of the commune stocke of the congregacion; towardes the yonger women and towardes suche as be as yet of suspecte age. Furthermoze he prescribeth vnto him what he must commaunde to Waiters, what to seruautes, what to ryche men, admonyng him to reiecte with all possyble meanes contencious sophisticall questions, that haue nothing but a bayne shewe of learning. This Epistle he wrote from Laodicea by Tychicus the Deacon.

Thus endeth the  
Argument.

¶¶¶¶.

The

# The paraphrase of Erasmus vpon

the first Epistle of S. Paule the  
Apostle to Timothee.

## The first Chapter.

The first.

**P** Paule an Apostle of Iesus Christ, by the compassion of god our fauourer, and lord Iesus Christ which is our hope. Vnto Timothe his naturall sonne in the faith. Goece, necessity & peace from God our father, and from the lord Iesus Christ our lord. As I besought the to abide still at Ephesus (when I departed into Macedonia) such to do, that thou commaundest some, that they folowe no straunge doctrine, neither geue heed to fables and tidles genealogies, which bryde doute more then godly edifying, which is by faith: for the ende of the commaundement is, loue our of pure herte, and of a good conscience, and of sayth vnfaigned: from the whiche thinges, because some haue crept, they are intred vnto vayne iangelynge, because they woulde be doctours of the lawe, and yet vnderstande not what they speake, neyther wherof they aspyre.



**P** Paule an Apostle and messenger: let any man woulde suspecte that I goe aboute myne owne busynes or humayne affaires, and not a messenger of Moses or anye other man, but the messenger of Iesu Christ, whiche being sent of late in his owne person vpon his fathers message, dyd faithfullpe sturthe the busynes of hym that sent him. And as for me I take not this message vpon me on myne owne head, nether receaued I it of man, but was not onely called vnto it by the appoyntement of the euerlastyng god, but I was also dyuinen perforce vnto it by his commaundement and auctorite: in so muche that it was not in my choise to shyfte myne handes of that office, as paynfull as it is, whiche was entoynd vnto me by the auctorite of God, the onely autoure of all our saluacion. For what so euer the sonne hath entoynd vs by the fathers auctorite, that same doe I take as entoynd of the father himselfe, by whome we are also bounden vnto him for our saluacion: aswell in that we are redeemed by his death from eternal destruction, as also in that we are by his myghtye helpe deliuered from the rageyng tempestes of afflictions. From the which albeit our chaunce be not to be set at libertie for a tyme, yet there is no cause why we shoulde doute of our safe preseruacion, hauynge Christe to our protectour, whome the father hath appointed to be bothe the example and outour of our moost certaynly assured hope. For lyke as he whan he was whynned and mayled to the crosse suffred corporal death, howbeit he rose anon againe to lyfe that neuer shall dye: euen so whan we haue bene oppressed with present sorowes of this worlde, he shall one daye restore vs alvye againe to the same immortallitie. For this respectes sake, Paule being strenghened throughe his auctorite and mayntenance, and an inuincible Apostle writeth vnto Tymothe, his true naturall sonne: whō I haue not chosen (quod he) out of an other mannes stocke, but I begat him my selfe out of these bowels of myne, throughe þe gospel, whā he was yet a straungier frō Christ: & he for his parte is so like, & so expressely resemblith this father of his, in stedfastnes & sinceritie of faith & pure teaching of the gospel,

By the commission of  
god our fauourer.

So his natural sonne.



gospell, that it appeareth by euident matier in dede, that he is no suche as maye  
 be doubted whether he be myne or not, but that he is my natural very owne vn-  
 doubted bogotten sonne, and therfoze a great deale moze dearely beloued vnto  
 me, thā yf I had gotten him of my bodily substaunce after the commune maner  
 as men doe. The bodily substaunce begetteth childzen that shall lyue but a  
 whyle, but by the gospell are we borne to lyue alwayes and neuer dye. If paren-  
 tes haue a moze peculiar and a nerer hartie loue, to suche of their childzen as be  
 mooste lyke fauoured vnto them than to other, and therby doe as it wet knowe  
 them suerly to be their very owne: howe muche moze lust cause haue I to loue  
 this sonne, whome I begate vnto Christ through the faithe of the gospell, and  
 in whome I beholde the syncretitie of my faithe borne new againe as it were?  
 Let the Jewes make boaste at their pleasure, for geating one companion or o-  
 ther as a childe gotten by adopcion to their Moses: I boaste that I haue got-  
 ten suche a sonne as this to the faythe of the gospell and vnto Christe. For it is  
 expedient that the Jewes synagoge should from hence forth geue ouer bea-  
 ring of childzen. And it is tyme, that the Gospell spreade forth his frutefulnes  
 of faith abrode in to the whole vniuersall worlde. Howe than, lyke as I haue  
 manyfold causes to boaste of suche a sonne, inasmuch as I maye safely com-  
 mitte vnto him the office of gospell preachinge: euen so I thynke there is no  
 cause why he should reuerent the hauing either of suche an Apostle, or of such  
 a father. I haue committed a parte of myne owne office vnto him, howbeit god  
 hath geue me autozitie thus to doe, soe as he can stande in no doubt touching  
 the charge of the congregacions appointed by me, onles peraduenture he dy-  
 sturk the autozitie of god. Howe what should I beyng a mooste louyng fa-  
 ther wyshe vnto so entierly a deare beloued sonne? what thinges elles, than the  
 same, that the supzeme gouernour of our lyfe would haue vs to be ryche and  
 plentuous of, and in the whiche he would sayne haue vs to growe stronge dat-  
 tye moze and moze, vntill we be growen vnto such a state as Christ may vout-  
 chesafe to knowe vs for his owne lawfull bzythen? Therfore I wyshe Grace  
 vnto him, that he maye perspetyly vnderstande, that all faithfull beleuers are  
 saued by the free benefite of Christ without helpe of Moses law. And not onely  
 grace, but mercye also to be alwayes ready with present helpe to succoure hym  
 in his trauayle amonge so many daungerous mutacions of thinges. For I  
 am not all ignoraunt, what combzous stozmes the lyfe of such as be preachers  
 is endaungered withall. fynally, as it is the propretye of our profession, I  
 wyshe him peace and conkozde: and that he loke not to receyue these benefites of  
 the worlde, whose succours are but bayne: nether of Moses, because it is a per-  
 nicious matier to haue any trust in his shadowes, sence the true lighte of  
 the gospell shoone clearly forth: ne yet of any other mortall man, but of god  
 the father, who forsaketh not those that faithfully trust in him: & of his sonne  
 Iesus Christ our lozde, who, lyke as he hath all thinges commune with the fa-  
 ther, eue so he sayleth not to helpe those, that haue ones wholly committed them  
 selues vnto his fideitie, as faithfull seruauntes that depende all together of  
 suche a maister as none is to be compared vnto him either in goodnesse or po-  
 wer. Thou knowest, naturall deare sonne, what hurly burly we had, and what  
 daungper of our lyfes we were in, to wyne some congregacion vnto Christe:  
 and it is not vnknown vnto the, howe dylgently the false apostles watche  
 in euery place, & goe about to drawe vnto Moses, those lately entred yong-  
 linges

In the  
 faith.

Grace mercie  
 & peace.

As I de-  
 soughte.

## The paraphrase of Erasmus vpon the first Epistle

lings whom we haue gathered together vnto the gospel: & for none other purpose, but to get a flocke of disciples to them selues, and to be had in estimation among the commune people. And as for me, my studie is to enlarge the dominions of the gospels possession to the vttermoost of my power: so that neuertheles we maye mainteyne that, that is all ready gotten. To be shorthe, forasmuche as we can not be personally present in all places, we must nedes accomplish the that, whiche is behynde, partely with sendyng of Epistles, partly by the ministerie of felowe officers. In consyderacion wherof, at such tyme as I went againe into Macedonia about the necessarie affaires of the gospel, because the Ephesiāns shoulde not be vtterly destitute of me, I left the there euē as my selfe, to haue the autoritie as a notable vicegerent in so excellent and so paynefull an office. Thou seest the generall sorte of men wonderfullye enclined bothe to supersticion and vnto curious artes: notwithstanding the glozpe of the gospel is so muche the moze highly aduanced. And again, there be aduersaries so many and so cruell, that we had nede to set both fete fast to the grounde (as they saye) that we stande stronglye against them. Wherfore, the thing that whan I went thence I requited the to doe, the same being now absent I estones beseeche and praye the to doe: that is, that thou warne some corrupte apostles there, whose names I passe ouer aduysedly at this tyme (lest being thereby prouoked they waxe moze shameles) that they despyle not ne subuert the pure doctrine of the gospel that we taught to the Ephesiāns, with their new doctrine. And on the other parte, warne the faithfull flocke befoze hande, that they geue not light eare noz intendaunce to suche false apostles to their owne peryll, for they teache not those thinges that auayle to eternall saluacion, and are worthe the gospel of Christ, but cloute in a sorte of vnfrutefull Jewyshe fables, touching the superstitious constitucions of men, which auayle not a tote to true godlines: & of a perplexed ordre of pedegree rehearsed from grandefathers, great grandefathers, and great great grandefathers, as though the gyfte of saluacion taught in the gospel, were deriued vnto vs by cozpozall lynage descending from a sorte of degrees of sondy auncetours: and not rather by heauely goodnes powred once vnfrutefully vpon all them, that embrace the fayth of the gospel. And this geare they preache not to the glozpe of Christ, but partly that they them selues maye be had in pryce amonge you to be commended for noble doctours: partly to the intent, forasmuche as the gospels doctrine is playne and symple, eether to be taken for so muche the greater learned men, because they can cloute in a meynye of doubtfull difficulties that neuer can be made playne, and a sorte of riedles that haue no expolition: as though those thinges were not mooste beste that are mooste playne. The gospel byngeth saluacion to the beleuer in a small towne: But this kynde of mennes doctrine byngeth in question vpon question, and not onely is nothing auayleable vnto heauenly godlynes, that God geueth vs throughe faythe, but also it turneth by syde downe the chiefe poynt of the gospels religion. Whosoeuer beleueth purely, passeth not vpon questions. And he that knytteth and vnknytteth the knottes of questions, what other thing doeth he teache men but to stande in doute: Curiositie of questionyng is an aduersarye to fayeth. If they beleue God, what a doe haue they to quarell with his promysse: If the faythe and loue of the gospel geue saluacion without muche a doe, to what purpose are mennes phantasies myngled wth all, as cuttyng of the foreskyne, walshyng of handes, choyse of meates and obscuration

That thou  
 commaunde  
 some.

obseruacion of dayes: They make vaunt vnto you, that the lawe was geue<sup>d</sup> of god: and yet those that teache it, teache it moze greuously than learnedly, and vnderstande not the summe noz the ende of the lawe. Wherto should a man labour for saluacion by meanes of so many wery obseruacions, seying he maye let them alone and styre straight waye to the prycke it selfe: That mā is conynglye learned ynough in Moses lawe, that hath atteyned the effectes of the lawe. To be bytise, the thing that comprehendeth & accomplisheth al the whole efficacie of Moses lawe in a shorte summe, is loue, in case it procede from a pure herte and an vpright conscience and an vnfeyned faith without holownes. A perfite sincere loue telleth a great deale ryghtlyer, what is to be doen, than any constitutions, howe many soeuer they be. In case this loue be presente, what nede the prescriptes of the lawe: yf it be not presente, what auayleth the obseruacion of the lawe: An humayne loue, because it is many times blotted with affectiōs, standeth many tymes with a corrupte conuersacion, and somtymes comprehendeth not a full entier trust in god. But the Euangelicall loue is of this proper tie, that it neuer deceaueth, neuer wauereth, and can neuer cease from doyngge godly. For it geueth respecte to none other purpose but to the gloze of Christ, and comoditie of his neighbour: ne dependeth of any other but onely of Christ. Of this prycke forasmuche as some myste, therfore in stedde of the sure doctrine of Christ, they strawe abroad vayne smokes & mystes of Jewishe questions, to thintent they might seme gaye doctours of the lawe and set out them selues with vayne bablyng, whan they vnderstande not for all that the specialties of those thinges that they speake of, noz wherof they affirme. For all the whole lawe of Moses, although it be otherwyle dyuete and dyffuse, is collected into Christe alone. Than seying the lawe selfe applieth vnto Christ, it is shame for a man to professe him selfe a doctoure of the lawe, that interpreteth the lawe contrary to Christes mynde. Howbeit we speake not thus, as though we condemned y<sup>e</sup> lawe of Moses.

The case of the lawe is loue.

¶ We knowe, that the lawe is good, yf a man vse it lawfully: knowynge this, how that the lawe is not geuen vnto a ryghteous man, but vnto the vnyghteous and dyfobedient, to the vngodly and to synners, to vnholy and vncleane, to murtherers of fathers & murtherers of mothers, to manslayers, to whoremongers, to them that defyle theselues which mankynde, to menstealers, to lyars, to perjured, and yf there be eny other thing that is contrarye to the holosome doctrine accordynge to the gospel of the gloze of the blessed God, whiche gospel is committed vnto me. And I thanke Christe Iesus our Lorde, with hartly made me stronge: for he counted me true, and put me in offyce where as before I was a blasphemour, and a persecuter, and a tyraunt. But I obtayned mercy, because I dyd it ignorantlye thowme vndeleast. Nevertheless, the grace of our Lorde was exceedynge abundant with faith and loue whiche is by Christ Iesu.

The text.

We doe bothe knowe and acknowledge, that the lawe is good onles it be vnlawfully vled. And he is an abusour of the lawe, that expoundeth it otherwyle than it meaneth it selfe. The chiefest purpose of the lawe was, to lede vs vnto Christ. So that he turneth the lawe, whiche is good, into his owne destrucciō, that by the lawe draweth folkes awaye from Christ. And he that dyscerneth and espiech in what behalfe the lawe (that was geuen but for a tyme) must geue place to the gospel, and in what parte it oughte to continue in his perpetuall strenght: he that vnderstandeth after what sorte to applye the grosse lettre of the lawe vnto the spirituall doctrine of the gospel: and he that perccaueth, how they whome Christ hath redemed with his bloude from the mannyng of synne,

The lawe is good.



## The paraphrase of Erasmus vpon the first Epistle

The lawe is  
not geue vnto  
a righteous  
man.

and doe moze vpon their owne Accorde at the mocion of loue, than Moses law  
appointeth, haue no uede of the feare noz admonicion of the lawe, cyther to be  
restrayned from naughtines or stiered to their duetye doynge: to him in dede the  
lawe is good. For he vnderstandeth that the lawe belongeth not to him, that  
hathe learned by the gospell, not onely to hurte no bodye, but also to doe good  
vnto his enemyes. Wherto Woulde an hourse nede bydle or spurte that run-  
neth frely and well as he shoulde doe? They that are ledde and ordred by the  
spirite of Christ, runne vncompelled, and doe moze than al the whole law requi-  
reth: and haung once frely atteyned ryghteousnes, abhorre from all vnryghte-  
ousnes. Therfoze the lawe, that by feare restrayneth from euyl doinges, is not  
geuen in any wyse vnto them, that doe wyllynglye and gladly that whiche the  
lawe requirerth, althoughe they haue not the wordes of the law. For whom thā  
is the lawe ordayned? Veraylye vnto them that turne the deafe eare towardes  
the lawe of nature, and bepng without loue a readylye enclined to al myschafe,  
are gupped by their owne lustes, onles they be holden backe with the barre of  
the lawe: And in case the lawe suffre them to synne vnpunished, thā they retorne  
by and by to their owne dyspolicion, and become the same openly that they wer  
inwardelye: that is to saye, vniuste, rebelles, wycked and vngodlye, dysobediēt,  
impure, kylers of fathers and mothers, hozemongers, despylers, of them selues  
with mankynde, man robberye, lypers and perjured persons. The threath-  
nynges of the lawe were iustlye objected against the Jewes because they were  
pzone to these myschiefes, to restraine their sauyllye vyle natures from these  
wicked dooinges befoze rehearsed for feare of punysshement, a all other maner  
of naughtines that is againste the excellent lawe of the gospell, whiche Moses  
gaue vs not, but the blessed god him selfe deliuered vs by his onely sonne Je-  
sus. The Jewes make boaste, that their lawe is glozious: the lawe that we haue  
is muche moze glozious. They bragge of their autoz Moses, and wee with a  
great deale iustre cause boaste of our autoz god and Christ. They preache the  
lawe of Moses, & restrayneth a certayne sozte of great notable crymes through  
punysshement, and I preache the lawe of the gospell, whiche dyspatcheth all  
lustes at once, that are contrarpe to true godlynes. And who is their autour of  
preachynge Moses lawe, leat them loke to that them selues: But in dede I am  
put in trust to preache this honourable myghtye puyssaunte gospell, that ne-  
deth none ayde of the lawe, and it was not comitted vnto me by men, but by god  
him selfe: not that I thinke me woorthy in any condicion to haue so weightye a  
matter committed vnto me. It was not of my deseruyng but of the goodnesse  
of god, vnto whome I rendre thankes for geuing strenght vnto suche a wret-  
ched bodye as I am, a so ferre vnmete for this office, to glozifye Iesus Christe  
our Lorde: whose busynes I doe faithfullye, lyke a faithfull seruaunt: and yet  
I chalenge none other commendacion to my selfe, but that lyke as he hathe  
thought me a faithfull minister to preache the gospell, euen so doe I syncerelye  
and vnspenydlye laboure in the office that he hathe put me in trust withal, with-  
out any folowynge of their example that preache Moses lawe to Christes re-  
proche, onelye seruyng their owne gayne and the glozye of them selues, and not  
of Iesus Christ. I confesse that in tynes past I was ledde in the same blynde-  
nes that they are, as long as I continued in the zeale of the lawe of the fathers,  
I was a blasphemour against the name of Christ, I was so cruell a persecutour,  
that I coude neuer lynne doynge of vpolence. For I persecuted the springing  
glozye



gloze of þe gospel, not onely w<sup>th</sup> braueryes, but also euē vnto enprysonyng and murtheryng. Yet hitherto I am behynde these men in nothing: peradventure in this case I am to be preferred before them, inasmuche as I dyd these thynges by the onely symple stickyng to the lawe, throughe ertour and ignoraunce: inasmuche as I was not yet called to the feloweshyp of the gospel: But they haue once professed Christ, and yet beyng enemyes of his gloze, and to make deliuous of their owne, Doe of a malicious obstinacie cloute in the vnpromisable burthen of Moses lawe, And for this cause sake, seyng I dyd thus onely of ignoraunce, God had mercede vpon me, wher as they are vlynded euery daye more and more. The more frequently that I fought than for the lawe agaynst Christ, the more hartely do I nowe defende the doctrine of Christ against the affirmourts of the lawe. For in stede of that earnest vehement studye of the lawe, whiche is to be put awaye, grace hath succeeded haboundantly: And in stede of the trustyng of the lawe, the faithfull trustyng in Christ is commen in place. In stede of the malicious hatred of the Jewes, charitie towardes all men is entred, whiche we haue obtayned bothe by the example and gyfte of Christ.

**T**his is a true sayyng (and by all meanes worthy to be remembred of vs) that Christ Iesus came into the worlde, to save synners, of whome I am chefe: Notwithstandyng, for this cause obtayned I mercy, that Iesus Christ shoulde spake shewe on me all louge patience, to declare an ensample vnto them whiche shoulde beleue on him vnto eternall lyfe. So then vnto God, byng exaltynge, vnmortall, vndyngible, wylle, onely be honoure and prayse for euer and euer. Amen. This commaundement cometh I vnto thee, soueraine Symotheus, accordyng to the prophesyes, whiche in tyme past were prophesped of the, that thou in them wouldest lyght a good lyght, hauyng faith and good conscience: whiche some haue put awaye from them. And as concernyng faith haue made spywacke. Of whose nombre is Symeas and Alexander, whome I haue deliuered vnto Saran, that they maye learne not to blasphem.

The text.

The Jewes haue nothing to saye agaynst me, althoughe I sayde that I am by the goodnes of god without the helpe of the lawe bycommen of a wicked and a myscheuous man, now that, that I am. But the thyng that semeth vnto them vncredible, is by moost euident argumentes vndoubtedly true: and the thyng that they renounce, is withal studious endeuoure to be embraced (as they saye) with nycting armes: that Iesus Christe seyng the lawe to be vneffectuall vnto perfite saluacion, was made man and came in his owne person into the worlde, to thintent that throughe his death he myght geue vs perfyte health, and in sufferynge the pernes of our vnrighcoulnes he myght geue vnto vs his owne ryghtcoulnes. Finally, albeit I was an earnest mayntenuoure of the lawe of the fathers, yet I doe not onely not excepte my selfe out of the nombre of synners, but also I knowledg me to be euen the chiefest among them. I wyl not denye myne vncleane. It for it reds undeth vnto the gloze of Christe. The lesse that I deserue mercede, the more excellent is his clemencye. I was worthy punishment. And howe commeth it to passe than that Christ would not onely pardon myne offences and declare his excedyng gentlines towardes me, but also enriche me w<sup>th</sup> so many great free gyftes: For what other purpose, but throughe this notable example, to prouoke all men to hope after lyke forgiveness, howe flythly soeuer they haue lpyed before, so that they put no trust in the ayde of Moses lawe, and set all their whole faith in Christes goodnesse, that continueth w<sup>th</sup> vs still vnto euen'lastyng lyfe. The promyses are great, but the promyse maker is trustye and sure. And no man shall put any mistrust in

the

## The paraphrase of Erasmus vpon the first Epistle

the promises, that considereth Christ to be the promise maker. And in case any man could contemne him as a man hauing suffred vpon the crosse, yet let him consider that the moost highe euerlastyng kynge God the father immortall, inuisible, and onely wyse is the chiefe autor of this busines, who by his some getueth vs all thinges. Therfore nothyng ought to seeme incredible, that almyghty God promyseth. And as for men, they can chalenge to themselues no parte of habilitie to geue this so singuler a treasure, forasmuche as he ought to haue all honour and gloze, not for a certayne of yeares, as the gloze of Moyses lawe was, but in all ages for euermore. For it becometh the immortall God to haue immortall honour. That, that I haue sayd, is true, and as the matter is in dede. Than lyke as I do faithfully behaue my selfe in the busynes appointed vnto me, euen so doe I geue the this in commaundement, my louyng sonne Timothy, that thou folowe thy fathers example, in accomplisshyng the offyce, that thou haste taken vpon the, thoroughly in all poyntes. It is goddes busynes that thou takest in hande, wherunto thou wast not called by any promotion of man, but by the appoyntement and commaundement of god. Under his baners thou arte a souldiour, and of him thou shalt receiue the rewarde of victorie. Thou seest what a bande of men thou hast committed to thy credence, thou seest with what maner of aduersaries thou haste a doe, there is none oportunitie for the to be negligēt or to slepe thy matters. And it were the greatest shame in the world and a very wycked parte for the to shyne from him, whose wordes thou arte sworne vnto, & whose name thou hast once professed. His iudgement was that thou wouldest proue a valeaunt and a faithful garde, for so the spirite of Christ by his inspiracion shewed vnto vs, at such tyme as we committed autoritie of priesthoode vnto the by layyng on of handes. See therfore that thou constrainste answer aswell the iudgement that God gaue before of the, as the faythfull truste that we haue in the: so as god maye bothe prayse the for a noble guyde, and I maye reknowlege the to be myne owne sonne. It is an excellent warre, that thou arte occupied in, see that thou applye it manfully. And that shall be, in case thou kepe a syncre perfitte fayth, and vnto faythe ioyne a good conscience: that thou put no doubt in goddes promyses and frame thy selfe in vprightnesse of lyfe accordyng to the syncretie of thy iudgement. The prynciple of lyfe ought to be of suche efficacie, that it maye be not onely allowed with other men, but also that the conscience maye be vpright before God. The thinges that decaye the strength of faythe are humane que- stions, and the appettes of me are the thinges that defile the conscience: wher- as those y pretend to goe about Christes affaires, haue respecte to other pur- poses than vnto Christ. Synallye these two cleaue so faste one to the other, that if the one be decayed, the other is in reuerdie. For he that hath not a syncre conscience can not possibly haue a syncre faythe. For howe can the thing be cal- led syncre that is dead: or how can the thing endure that wanteth lyfe and spirite. For it cometh to passe that those whiche haue a naughtie conscience in all thinges, at length fall cleane awaye from beleuyng those thinges that the gospel teacheth concernyng the rewarde eyther of an innocent lyfe or of a naughtie lyfe. An example of this matier we haue lately scene to muche true (alas therfore) in Alexander and Timeneus, who inasmuch as in the preachyng of the gospel they holde not faste the helme of an vpright conscience, are fallen into the rockes of Infidelitie, and beyng once fallen from the hollesome pro- fession

We haue  
the lyke ad-  
mercares  
but not the  
lyke dilige  
preachers.

Paul made  
a prest by  
layyng on of  
handes with-  
out any  
kyng.

Faith and  
conscience.

The cause  
of the decay  
of fayth and  
good con-  
science.

cession of Christ, they are so carped away with the waues of naughtye lustes, that they rayled with open spitefull wordes against the doctrine of the gospel, so that they can not be possibly amended with gentyll monitions. And therfore I haue (with myne owne sentence geuing) cutte them of from the rest of Christs bodye, as rotten membyes: so thintent that beyng so corrected they maye learne through the shame and reproche, to cease from their wycked spyghtful raylynges, and to be lesse hurtfull to other, though they can not be good to themselves. Those are to be pulled vnder with rigorous handling, that are growen into so highe wickednes, that there can be no good doone vpon them with gentyll remedyes. Therfore, not onely the iudgement of god touching thy synneritie, not onely myne example, nor onely thyne owne profession, and in þe thou arte a souldiour of Christ, but also suche miennes abominable example ought to kindle thy hartte to doe thyne offyce throughly as thou shouldest doe.

The ii. Chapter.

Exhortation therfore, that about all thinges prayers, supplications, intercessions, and geuyng of thanks be had for all men: for kynge, and for all that are in auctorite, that we maye lyue a quiete and a peaceable life, with all godlynes and honesty. For that is good and accepted in the syght of god our saviour, whiche wyl haue all men to be saued, and to come vnto the knowledge of the truely. For there is one God, and one mediator betwene God and man, euen the man Christ Iesus, whiche gaue hym selfe a ranfome for all men, that it shoulde be testified at his tyme, wherunto I am ordeyned a preacher and an apostle, I tell the truely in Christ, and lye not: beyng the teacher of the Gentyls with faith and veritie.

The recte,



It is not ynoughe for the to be without fault thy selfe, but it is the parte of a byshop to prescribe also vnto other what is necessary for them to doe. And those ought to be suche thinges, as maye appeare worthy an Euangelical conscience. To be bryefe, it standeth them in hande that professe Christ, to be moost fetre of from desyre of reuengement, from desyre of hurte doing, and from all kynde of dyspleasure. Therfore see thou exhorte those that thyne are, to begynne the first thing they doe in the mornynge, to vse godlynes and to worshyp Christ. And first of al let them praye to god, to put away all thinges that trouble and disquiet the state of Religion, and of the commune wealth. Than let them aske of him those thinges, that are auayleable to godlye doynge, and to the tranquillitie of the commune wealth. This doen, let them beseeche Christe nothing elles againste suche as persecute his flocke, but his ayde and succoure. Laste of all, let thanks be rendred vnto him for those thinges, that by goddes goodnes haue happened, and earnest supplications made for the thinges that haue not yet happened. And let these be doen not onely for the Christians but for all maner of men also, lest Christian loue shoulde appeare to be but a straitelaced loue, as though it fauoured none but of his owne sorte: but let it be extended abrode in moost large maner, after the example of god, bothe to the good and to the badde: lyke as he beyng parfityly good, and beneficiall to all as much as in him is, bestoweth his sonye to shyne vnto the iuste and also to the vniust.

And in asmuche as god geueth vs publique quietnesse by meanes of Ethnike rulers: it is reason that thanks be rendred also for them. And it is vncertayne to vs, whether that ruler beyng a wycked ymage worshypper, shall in shorte space receyue the gospel. For that cause, Christian loue wylsheth the saluacio of



## The paraphrase of Erasmus vpon the first Epistle

al. The Jewe loueth the Jewe, the newly entred into a secte loueth his lyke, the Greke loueth the greke, the bozther loueth the bozther, the kynsman loueth the kynsman. This is not a Gospellyke loue, but that is a gospellyke loue, that loueth the godlye for Christ, and loueth the wycked that they maye once re pente and turne vnto Christ. They doe sacrifice vnto deuyles and curse y on bytterlye. And you contrary wyse, cleaue harde to the fote-steppes of Christe, who, whan he was exalted vpon h crosse, and was reuiled w such spyght full rebukes as were moze greuous than the punyshementes of the crosse selfe, he gaue none euyl wordes againe, he cursed not bytterly againe, but with an excedynge great crye besought the father to forgeue them. And praier is to be made not onely for h whole general sorte of me, but also especially for kinges, yea though they be Ethnykes and straungiers from the profession of Christe, and for all them, that after the publique ordze of the worlde are set in any autozittie. And let not this moue you, that of them we be afflicted, we be beaten, we be caste in pryson, we be put to death. Rather theyz blyndenes is to be pitied, and not walpce requitte with malpce. Or elles they shalbe neuer the better, and we shal cease also to be Christians. This waye pleased Christe as a waye of mooste speciall efficacie, wherwith he woulde haue all dyuuen to him selfe. And though there be some, vpon whom our lotie is lost, yet wee wyl not geue ouer to be lyke our selues for al that. This worlde hath his ordze, which it is not expedyent that we shoulde dysquyet: seyng it is our duetye to procure peace in euey place. Their power and autozittie in some purpose doeth seruice vnto the iustyce of God, in that they holde vnder the euyl doers with punyshementes, in that they kepe the naughtye ones in their duetye doing, in that they put awaye robberyes, in that with their martiall powres they defende the publique peace, in that they gouerne the commune wealth with their lawes. These thinges albeitt they doe not for the loue of Christ, yet in a generalltye it is not expedyent that the state of the commune wealth shoulde be dysurbed by meanes of vs, lest the doctrine of the gospel shoulde seme a sedicious doctrine, and than we shoulde begynne to runne in a hatred, not bycause we professe Christe, but bycause we hynder the publique peace. And in case they abuse their power vpon vs at any tyme; it is a Christian mans parte to forget the euyl turnes and remembze the good turne. In this we are bounden to their autozittie, in this we are bounde to their defence and martiall powres, yea we are rather bounden to God by them in this, that we maye be safe from sedicions, safe from robberye, safe from batayles, and leade a quiet lyfe without trouble. It woulde doe well to haue in remembzance, what a greate sea of myschiefes the hurly burly of warre byngeth in with it, and what comodities peace hath in it. Many are the myschiefes that beggetly nede of necessarie thinges procureth. Peace byngeth plentie. In peace there is oportunitie to vse godlynesse, and warre teacheth all maner of wyckednes. Our profession loueth chaste behauiour, and in warre who can be safely chaste as he shoulde be? And though men for the moost parte abuse the benefyte of peace to wycked sensuall purposes, yet for all that let vs vse the publique peace to the seruing of god and integritie of honest manners, obeying princes in the meane season in al thinges, that they eyther commaunde vs rightly accordyng to their office, or elles doe nothing vnto vs but make vs punyshed persons, and not wicked persons. They take awaye our substance, but yet no parte of our honestye is dymynished. They lade vs with fetters, but they

The chiefe pollicie that bringeth me to Christ, is christian charitie.



they drawe vs not away from Christ. They sea the body, and sende vs out to the hairen of immortallitie. But than they myght hurte vs in dede, if they could make vs couetous, yf they coulde make vs astraped of deathe, yf they coulde make vs despyous of life, if they could make vs ambitious, if they could make vs despyous of reuengement, yf they coulde make vs to distrust Christ.

Therefore Princes are neyther vnonestly to be flattered, nor sedictously re-  
pugned. And in case it be godlye requisite at anye tyme in the ghospelles be-  
halfe, to contemne theyr commaundementes, yet it muste be done with suche a  
temperance, that they may perceaue vs to doe it not for the displeasure of them  
but for a good will vnto godlynes.

Notwithstandyng, I geue not monicion hercof for this purpose, that  
where wee are farre vnable to matche them in worldlye powers, we shoulde  
prouok their pursaunce vpon vs to our owne harne, but that in this kinde  
of lenitie we shoulde resemble Christe oure prince, who, whan he coulde alone  
haue done more than all the Princes and rulers of this worlde, yet had leaue  
wynne the worlde to him selfe in sufferynge of euill, than in repellyng or requi-  
tyng of euill: he had leaue wynne the conquest with gentle dealyng, than  
with reuengynge: he had leaue heale than destroye: he had leaue entice than  
opprelle. By this waye wonne he the victorie, of this fashion it was the fa-  
thers pleasure, that the sonne shoulde beare the bell awaye. His example it be-  
houeth vs to folowe, in case we wyll haue oure prayes, in case we wyll haue  
our sacrifices, welcome and acceptable vnto him. He woulde rather be a sau-  
oure vnto vs, than a vengeaunce taker: with greace gentlines he suffred our  
impictie, tyll we came to repentaunce. And the thyng that is come to passe in  
vs, the same, lyke as he is of a passyng greace goodnes, he woulde also haue  
come to passe in all men, yf it were possible. He is the saufour of all, he exclu-  
deth none from saluation, he byngeth the lyghte of the ghospell vnto all.

And he that refuseth it, he that wythdraweth hym selfe, leaue hym blame hym-  
selfe for his owne byndnes: and he that perissheth, perissheth throughte his  
owne faulte. For what can the Physician doo, yf the sicke doo refuse holsome  
medicines: Verilye it is not long of him, that men atteyne not saluation, and  
suppressyng the byndnesse of the lyfe paste, come to the lyghte of the euange-  
lycall tructh. Christe is the tructh, and he that confesseth him, shalbe safe, from  
what kynde of lyfe soeuer he come to hym. Saluation is all one thyng and  
commeth all of one, and by one alone it is offred vnto all. Ther is no thyng in  
this behalfe that the Jewe maye chalenge to himselfe as his owne.

There is but one God, not peculiar to this or that sorte of people, but the  
commen God indifferently of all. There is but one that reconcyleth man-  
kinde vnto God, God and man Christ Iesus, for it was conuenient, that he  
whiche shoulde make the arbitrement of concord, betwene God and manne,  
shoulde haue some thyng commen with bothe the parties, so as beyng God  
he myghte make intercession to God, and beyng man myghte reduce men a-  
gayne into fauour. Why than doeth any man chalenge him properly to hym  
selfe? If the commitee father of all sent him to saue al, and if he gaue him selfe  
for the redemption of all, it is mete for vs to endeuour by all meanes, that his  
Death maye be indifferently auayleable vnto all.

## The paraphrase of Erasmus vpon the fyrst Epistle

In case he died euen for the Ethnikes, why shoulde it p̄ke vs to offre sacrifices of prayes to God for theyr saluation? And if it haue bene doubted of at any tyme, that Chryste came for the vniuersall saluation of the Gentiles, nowe it is certapnly manifest, and proued matier in dede, that Chrystes death belongeth aswell to the gentiles as to the Jewes. In tymes past the Jewes pertinacie was somewhat bozne withal, by cause they shoulde not fynd fault that they were contemned or caste of: but anone gods will was to haue it most playnely protested that there is no difference at al of nation, of supersticion or condicion of them that flee to the doctrine of the gospel. Of this matier goddes pleasure was to haue me chiefly a preacher. In this behalfe he would haue me be a messenger, where as the rest of the Apostles befoze, slowlye wpyth leasure and wpyth muche a doe admytted the gentyles vnto the grace of the ghospell. And at this daye there be not all wantynge, that saye there is no entraunce vnto the ghospell but by the lawe of Moyses. Not withstanding Chryste hath appointed the office bothe of a preacher and of an Apostle vnto me, that I shoulde preache vnto all men eternall saluation without ayde of the lawe, and that we are all bounden to thanke hym for the same and none but him. I doe not take this autoxittie falslye to my selfe: for Chryste commaunded me to it. And it is no bayne geare that I preache, but the thinges that I speake are true, and I preache lyke the doctoz of the gentiles. I vse not arrogantly to set oute myselfe with vanyties of greate hyghe titles, as the false Apostles are wont to do, for I haue tryed my selfe vnfeynedly the apostle of p̄ Gentiles, which haue not trust in Moyses constitucions among them, as they doo, but the faith of the ghospell: nor castynge befoze their eyes mystes of bayne questions, but plaine symple pure veritie, teaching those thynges onely that make auapleably vnto true godlynes rather than vnto priuate lucre or bayne ostentacion.

The texte.

I wil therfoze that the men pray euery where lifyng by pure handes without wyathe, or doubtyng. Likwys also p̄ women, that they araye themselves in cumly apparel wpyth shamefastnesse and discreete behauiour, not with boyrded heare, ether golde or pearles, or costlye araye: but as becommeth women, that professe godlynesse throughe good wythes. Let the women learne in silence with al subieccion. I suffer not a woman to teache nyther to vsurpe aucthozyte ouer the man, but to be in sylence. For Adam was by the fourme, and then Eue, Adam also was not deceaued, but the woman was deceaued, & was subdued to the transgressyon. Not withstandinge thow bearinge of chyldren, she shal be saued, yf they contynue in fayth and loue, and holynes with discrecyon.

Nowe to thintent we maye retorne to the purpose that we communed of afoze, I woulde haue men to pray not onely in the congregacio, but also where-soeuer occasion requyrez. The Jewes praye to god in no place but at Hierusalem. The Samaritanes pray on mountaines and in groaues. But vnto the Christians al places are pure and holy to offer vp sacrifices of prayes. They esteeme euery place to be an holy tēple to God, and whan they offre as it were a sacrifice, they lift by pure hādes euery where to heauen. They haue no nede to wishe for p̄ mercy leate or most holy place called *sanctū sanctorū*, of p̄ temple, for  
god

God wyl graciously heare them in euery place wheresoeuer they be that pray vnto him. They nede not to passe vpon Jewyshe synne offrynges, ether ceremonies or sacrifice. For to offer the sacrifices of Christians euery man may be a sacrificer. God respecteth not the offryng vp of beastes or perfumynge of swete odours, for a pure earnest supplication procedyng from a pure harte, is a sacrifice mooste acceptable vnto God. Leate the Jewes washe them selues as cleane as they can, yet their oblations are vncleane. God alloweth the handes for cleane, though they be not washen, so that the conscience be quiet, in case he mynde no wronge, yf he wyshe well to all men, in case he be soyled with no spottes of fylthye lust, couetousnes, nor ambition. Thys is the puritie and cleanes that maketh a Christian mannes sacrifice acceptable in the syghte of God: with this kynde of sacrifice he delighteth to be offred vnto.

Howe let the women also praye after thexample of the men. Yf there be any effeminate affection in their stomakes, let them caste it out fyrst of all, and byyng in innocencie of honest maners in stedde of Jewyshe cleansynges: to thys sacrifice doyng let them decke the soule cleanly and not the bodye, nor entice mennes eyes to phantisie them wyth the nakednes of theyr persones, but leat them be couered with a vesture, and that suche a vesture, as representeth sobzenes, bashfulnes, and womanlines. God forbiddeth that Christian women shoulde come forth among the holy congregacion in such maner of apparail, as the commen sorte of vnsatyfull women are wonte to goe forth vnto weddinges and maygames, trymmyng them selues fyrst with a greate a doo by a glasse, with fynely rolled heare or embrodryng of golde: eyther with ptecouse stones hangyng at their eares or neckes, or otherwisse in spikes or purple, aswell to set out theyr beautie vnto suche as loke vpo them to playe the naughtye packes, as also in shewyng their Jewelles and substaunce, to vpbrynde suche as be poozer than they of their pouertie.

But rather leat the apparail of Christian women be suche, as maye be answerably like to their lyuyng, & as maye woorthly belemethose womē that professe true godlynesse, and the true wourshyppe of God, not in gorgyous shewyng of haboundaunce of ryches, but in good woorkes: whiche ryches God hath most spingulare delyght in: In whole syght that thyng is vncleane, that appeareth vnto the wo:ld to be excellent and gaye. And for asmuche as the kynde of women is naturally geuen to the vyce of muche bablyng, and there is nothyng, wherein theyr womanlynesse is moze honestely garnyshe than with sylence, it is conuenient for them to accomplishe in dede, the thyng that they professe in apparayl: to be learners in the open companye of menne, and not teachers: to be folowers, and not foregoers: and to shewe no manner of authoritie towardes theyr husbandes, vnto whom they ought to be vnder subieccion: lest yf they once caste of the bydle of shamesfastnes and begynne to make them a doo in the open congregacion, poure assemblie, that oughte to be vsed in mooste sobze sorte, be disordred wyth a buspe hurlye buelpe. It is the mens offyce to speake in the congregacyon, namely if they haue any thyng to teache auayleable vnto godlynes. To conclude, what libertie euery man geueth hys wife, let him see to h himselfe. But I allowe not h any womā shal take vpo her to preache in h comen assēblie of people, yea although she haue habilitie to teach, lest if such a wyket wer once opened, h weake sexe wold waxe to bold, nor I

## The paraphrase of Erasmus vpon the fyrst Epistle

admitte, that they shall vsurpe anye kynde of autozitie vpon their husbandes, who they are bounden so to loue, that they stand in awe to the neuertheles. Therfore leat them kepe silence, and leat them geue reuerente hede to that, that theyr husbandes saye. Leat them acknowledge the ozdze of nature: that lyke as it is the office of the mynde to commaunde, and the body to obeye, euen so is the wyfe bounden to depende of her husbandes commaundement. For why doe we turne Goddes ozdze vp syde downe? Adam was made fyrste, and than by and by was Eue made for his sake. Than, why is that shamelesse made the later, that Goddes wyll was to haue the farther? Than as concernyng the fall, Eue was the fyrste deceaued, in that she gaue credence to the serpent, and beyng enticed with the fayzenes of the apple, neglected the commaundemēt of God. For the man could neither be deceyued with the serpentes promyses, nor enticement of the apple: but the oncly loue of his wife dzeue him perniciouslye to do after her. Howe howe standeth it together, that she whiche was once her husbandes maistres in committynge sinne, should now take the superioztie vpo her in teachyng of godlynesse? But let her rather aduisedlye knowe the olde imbecillitie of that sexe, the leauynges wherof are not all together done awaye, although the synne be pardoned throughe baptysme. And let her also consyder the dignitie and power of a mannes harte, and thynke it ynoughe for her, that where afoze tyme she was his leader vnto wickednes, nowe to be his folower vnto godlynes. And where in tymes past she went befoze him vnto destruction, nowe let her folowe hym vnto saluation. Neuerthelesse we do not thus babyshlye waimankynde, as though we woulde exclude them from the scloowshyp of saluation. For the woman also hath her proper offyce: wherein yf she vse her selfe byrighly, she shalbe companion of saluation. In the congregatyon there is none offyce for her to doe, but at home she hath to doe, and so to doe, as she maye attayne the rewarde of saluation. For that, that she offended afoze tyme in deceauyng the husbande, she must amende in bearyng and godly byrnyng vp of chyldren. And that shalbe done, in case she applye to the vttermost of her power to beare agayne vnto Christe throughe faythe, those that she hath bozne ones already to her husbande: and yf she enforme them in their tendryng age, so as they maye seme worthy of Christ, throughe charitie, holynes, shamefastenes and other vertues. It is a greate matier, that a woman shal doe, in case she be a good circumspecte housewife. That, whiche I haue sayed, ought to be regarded vndoubtedlye to be matier in dede.

### ¶ The.iii. Chapter.

The text.

This is a true saying: If a man desyre the offyce of a Byshoppe, he desyret an honeste woozke. A Byshoppe therefore muste be blamelesse, the husbande of one wyfe bylygent, sober, discrete, a keeper of hospitalitie, apte to teache, not geuyn to ouer much wyne, no fyghter, nor greedy of fylthy lucre: but gentle, abhorryng fyghtyng, abhorryng couetousnes, one that ruleth well his owne house, one that hath chyldren in subiection with all reuerence. For if a man can not rule his owne house, howe shall he care for the congregacion of God? He maye not be a yonge scholer, lest he swell and fall into the iudgemente of the cupyl speaker. He muste also haue a good reporte of the pynnynges whiche are wythoute, lest he fall into rebuke, and smart of the cupyl speaker.

¶ These by





**T**hese be almost the whole thynges that thou shalt appoynte vnto all sortes of people without difference. But yet there are matters of more weyghte importaunce, to be looked for in those that thou shalt thinke mete to be put in autoritie ouer the multitude. For it is conueniente, that he whiche pzeccelleth in honoz, should also pzeccelle in vertues. Verchaunce there be many that are despyous of dignitie, but for all that they weighe not with them selues, what carke and care dignitie hath annexed vnto it. He that desireth the office of a Byshoppe for none other ende, but for ambition, or for aduantage, or to be a tyranne, desireth to himselfe a pernicious matier, and is not wel aduised what this word (*Bishoppe*) meaneth. For this word (*Bishoppe*) is not only the name of dignitie, but also the name of occupaciō, of office, & of carefulnes. For it soundeth by interpretaciō a superintendent & one that careth for the comodities and behoues of others. So that whoso vnderstandeth this, & desireth the office of a Byshop, respectyng nothing elles but to doo good for manye, in dede his desire is honest, in that he coueteth occasion to exercise vertue, and not for honoure. And yet thou shalt not commit that offyce to any man, excepte thou perceyue hym thoroughly garnysed wth gyftes worthy a Byshop. And to thintent thou mayst the more certaynly descerne those gyftes, lo, I shall paint the out in fewe wordes the ymage of a ryght Byshoppe. First it behotieth hym to be of suche vpryghenesse of lyfe, that no faulte at all can be layed to hys charge. For it is not conuenient, that he whiche pzofolesseth hym selfe to be a teacher & a requitour of innocency in other, should not shewe in his own conuersacion and maners the same that he teacheth. And that he, whiche (accozdyng to the offyce that he hath taken in hande) oughte boldely and freely reprove them that doe amysse, should comytte the thyng, wherein he may be blamed hym selfe. For who geueth credence to the teacher, whose lyfe is contrary to his doctrine: who wyll suffer to be checked of hym, in whom he seeth eyther the same or elles more greuous offences: But that all should be vpryght and innocent, it is more easly possyble to be wysshed for, than hoped for. Yet truelye it is muche requisite for the one man, of whose doctrine the people dependeth, to be cleane without fault. Than in as much as chastitie is much to be commended in a Byshoppe, in case he haue not the gifte altogether to absteyne, this is to be speciallly obserued, that he haue bene or be the husbände of one wyfe. The first marriage maye be thoughte to be ordayned for the proctacion of chyldzen. But to marre agayne is not wythoute suspiciō of an incontinent mynde euen among the Ethnykes. As for the reste, I lette them not from maryeng oftener than once, yf they can not absteyne. For it is a harder matter, than I dare exacte of the whole multitude. But it becommeth a Byshoppe to be so ferre quite from all maner of faulte, that he should be voyde also of all suspiciō of faulte. Besydes these, that one man that hath charge ouer manye, oughte to be sobye and vigsilante, he is the watche man, and iopardie is pzelet on euery side. He may not be a sluggard, but he must circumspectly loke about hym on euery part, lest he sleeth in wayte, whā the capitayne is a sleepe, couey away some out of Christes tentes. Moreouer he must be graue & sad in his behauiour, in al thynges that he goeth about, and be voyde of all

## The paraphrase of Erasmus vpon the fyrst Epistle

lyghtenesse and foliſhe toying maners, that decaye and hynder the teachers reuerence and autozitie. And it is not ynoughe, that he ſhewe hym ſelfe gentle and courtcouſ towardes his owne folkes, but he muſte applye hym ſelfe, that ſtraungers alſo maye haue experience of hys gentlenesſe and lyberalitie, ſo as the repozte of his honeſt name maye be the moze largely ſpredde abrode.

And alſo lyke as he hath theſe vertues commonly with the moſte part of men, euen ſo this is peculyarly to be required in a Biſhoppe, that he be apte and redye to teache, not Jewiſhe fables and highe ſtately ſwelliſng Philoſophie of this woozde, but thoſe thynges that maye make vs trulye godly ones, and tyght Chriſtians. And þ chiefſt office of a good teacher, is, to know what thynges are the beſt to teache. Nexte this, to teache gladly, to teache getilly, to teache diligently, to teache louyngly, to teache without ſtatelynes, to teache reaſonably. For the doctrine of the ghospell is of ſuche ſorte, that it ouercometh with ſoftnes, & not with clamorous lowde ſpeakynge. And albeit for a tyme it be prouoked with the naughtynesſe of them that naught are, and be enforced to ſpeake ſomthyng ſomewhat ſeuerely, yet it neuer forgetteth Chriſtian charitie. But God ſozbyd, that a teacher of the ghospell ſhould (after the example of ſuche as be madde wypedronken railers) rage to intemprauntly agaynſt them that doo anyſſe, or with a ſcoldyng tounge runne throughe the heartes of them whom his duetie were rather to heale wyth fatherlye gentlenesſe: but in all thynges leat hym remembre Chriſtian ſobzietie and temperaunce, that is a greate deale moze auayleable to bynge men to amendement, than outragious crueltie is. Let him abhorre alſo from ſtryfe and contencion, that he ſeme not to do of malice, and not of loue, that, that he doeth. Charitie amendeth, contencion prouoketh. And leate him abhorre couetouſnes, that he ſeme not to counterfeit godlynes for gaynes ſake.

Finally, wylte thou knowe, howe he oughte to behaue himſelfe in the open publique affayres: Marke howe he doeth his owne priuate buſineſſe at home. In caſe he ſhewe hym ſelfe there a vigilauit houſkeper, yf he kepe all thyng in orde, yf he haue obedyent and diligent childzen, yf they be ſo taughte that in ſobze ſtylnes and comely manners they maye appeare to be brought vp vnder a godly parent, it is a good hope, that he is wel hable to take the publique charge of all, that in the adminiſtration of his owne houſeholde buſynes gyueth ſo good a preſidence of himſelfe. For an houſeholde is no thyng elles but a ſmall comūne wealthe, and the maſter of an houſeholde, is nothing elles, but the gouernoure of a ſmall citie. And euen ſo the wiſedome of the world iudgeth them mete to haue the weyghtier affayres of a comūne wealthe comyncted vnto them, that gouerne thynges of leſſe impoztaunce wyth commendacion. To conclude, how maye a man hope, that he ſhal wel gouerne the cure of the whole congregation, that can not well tell howe to gouerne his owne priuate houſe: howe ſhal he take charge of ſo many houſes, that is not hable ynough to take charge of one: By what meanes ſhal he care for ſo great a multitude, that knoweth not howe to prouyde for ſo fewe: Shall he faythfully cure thoſe that be ſtraungers, whiche haue his owne negligentye myſozdered: And ſhal he be a profytable man ouer Goddes congregation, that can not be profytable to a humayne congregation: Howe thys is alſo to be marked in the ſholynge of a Biſhoppe, not onely howe entierly bypyghte he hath behaued himſelfe

hymselfe in hys owne pryuate affaires, but also howe longe it is sence he came to the professyon of Chyrste. Baptylme in dede engraffeth a man to the body of Chyrste, but perfite godlynnes chaunceth not so sodaynlye to a man. Baptylme openeth the entraunce in to the congregacion, but in this case it remaineth that euery man for him selfe muste stryue and pzeace to the marke of holynes. Thoughe baptylme we are bozne a newe: but for all that, it remaineth, that in greate processe of tyme we muste gather streyngh and bygnesse, and waxe stronge with daylye increases of godlynnes in to full growen age. Therefore diligent hede must be taken, that no newe scholet, that is to saye, none that is lately called in to the felowshyppe of faythe, be put in autozitie ouer so weyghthe a buknesse. He is a good grasse, but yet tender, and vnmete peraduenture to beare a greate heauy burthen. And it is Acopetdye, lestt yf a man, that is but rawe and not yet suffycientlye confirmed in religion, be aduanced to honoure that he had not befoze, be puffed vp with pryde, and begynne perniciously to stande in hys owne conceipte, as thoughe he were chosen in to the company of religion, for thys intent, that he myghte haue pzeeminence ouer religton: and by that meanes it come to passe, that beyng cralled in the deuilles snares (which he layeth manyfoldely but none moze dilceatfully than he doeth the snares of ambicion) and behauyng hym selfe to muche statelye in the honour commytted vnto him, he escape not the mystepoztes of euyl speakers: whyche wyll thus entreprete, that he coueted the Chyrstian religion vpon this purpose, that where he was but of lowe estate amonge his owne secte, he myght be in autozitie and honour among the Chyrstians. He forsoke vs in a good howze, (wyll they saye) he chaunged his religion for his moze aduantage: he had leauer be a Chyrstian Byshoppe, than to lyue lyke a pryuate person among vs. From thys maner of suspicion, that mā shalbe quite, that a long season hath expressed speciall tokens of true godlynnes and sobrenes in hym selfe. I wyll not heare thys obieccion, yf a mā woulde saye: what matter maketh it to me, thoughe the Ethnykes doo mystepozte me: it is ynough for me, to be well taken among myne owne. But vnto me this is not ynough to be respected in a Byshoppe, for hys fame oughte to be so cleane and vnspotted from all suspicion of faulte, that it shoulde be but a small matter to be well reported of among his owne, vnto whom he is moze nerely and familiarly known, onles he be well allowed also by the testimonye of them that be wythout, whiche can not see hys true godlynnes so perfyte as it is, yea and take occasion to rayse slaunder of euery thyng that doe nothyng but onely appete outwardlye to be euyl. Wherefoze hede muste be wately taken, by all meanes, that none occason of slaunder be geuen to them that are straungers from the professyon that we be of: noz (as I maye so speake it) that they maye be habile probabilye to obiecte not onely any naughtye faulte but also any false feyned vpbayed. For, that they also shoulde haue a good opinion of vs, not onely thys frute commeth of it, that it maketh to the glozpe of Chyrste, but also they shall the moze easlye turne to amendemente from their wickednes, in case they haue good opinion of our godlynnes.

Althowse must the ministers be honest, not double tongued, not geuen vnto much wyne, nether greedy of fylthy lucre: but holdyng y mistery of the fayth with a pure conscience. And let them first be proued, and then let them minister, so that no manne be habile to re-

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proue them. Euen so muste they wyues be honest, not euil speakers: but sober and faithfull in all thynges. Let the deacons be the husbandes of one wyfe, & such as tute their children well, and theyr owne householdes. For they that minister well, get theym selues a good degree and greate lybertye in the sayth, whiche is in **2 Tim 3. 10.**

Nowe, for asmuche as the faultes of the ministers redounde vnto the infame of the autours, it shall not be ynoughe to take circumspecte hede, what a maner man he muste be, that thou callest to the office of a Bysshoppe, but also what maner of persones hys householdes folkes and ministers be, that are as members of the Bysshoppes. For they oughte necessarye to be answerable lyke vnto their prelate in all thynges: in all the behauiour of theyr lyuing, graue and manerly: and vopde of those faultes that the comen sorte of seruantes is commonly wont to be geuen to. They muste not be double tounge, not gauen to muche wyne, nor gapyng after fylthy lucre. Those that are entred in the mysteries of faythe, whiche cometh by preachinge the gospell, after suche sorte, that they evidently shewe in theyr conuersation, that they are Christians not for the pleasures of theyr maisters, but purely and of a good conscience. For the vpryghtnes of couersatiō is the token of a sincere profession. Neuerthelesse my meanyng is not, that they shoulde haue the administration of holy thynges by and by committed vnto them, but after thou shalt haue tryed them a great whyle, and after they haue ledde an innocent lyfe long after their baptisme, and haue behaued them selues so, as no faulte at all can be layed to their charge, than let them at lengthe be admittred to the holyc administration. Howeuer I requyre semblable the lyke sobrenes and integritye of lyfe in the Bysshoppes and Deacons wyues, bycause they also haue somwhat to do in the ministerie, and suche maners as they haue, the lyke must be rekened that their husbandes, or those that they minister vnto, haue. Therefore they oughte to be farre frome the faultes of the comen sorte of wyues, that they be not lyght or folysh, ne backbityng raylers, nor intemperate, but sobze women: not bablers, or women of vppie credence, but faythfull and constaunt in all thynges. To be shozte: the chastitie of the Deacons oughte in this behalf to be so answerably lyke vnto the Bysshoppes trade of lyfe, that they must also be the husbandes of one wyfe, lest often mariage shoulde cause any suspition of intemperaunce: and they muste shewe their owne demenour so in the honest byringng vp of their children and diligent ordyng of theyr own householdes, as they woulde proue to be in the holy ministerie. For albeit the Deacons office is inferiour than the Bysshoppes and Apostles office, yet who so euer behaueth hym selfe in that degree comelye and vpryghtlye, preferreth hym selfe no litell vnto hygher offices, as well in that, beyng acquainted wyth the practice of godlynes in hym selfe he hathe the better trust in hys owne constauce, as also in that, other men conceyue a greater confidence in hym, because of hys vpryght behauiour in hys offyce, that whan he is promoted to hygher degrees of Euangelicall religion, he wyll euen excede hym selfe in vpryghtnes and paynfull diligence. For euen Iesus Christes comen wealth, in gouernaunce hath degrees of offycers and certayne ordres, wherof the fyrste, is of the Deacons, the seconde, is of the Elders or Bysshoppes, the hyghest of all, is of the Apostles. And lyke as in a seculer comen wealth he is called to be a Mayor, that befoze vsed hymselfe stowfely in the wardenshyp: and agayn

he is



he is promoted from being Mayor to be Judge, or the Alderman, because he behaued hym selfe well in his Mayoraltye: euen so the offyce of the Deacon Declareth who is woorthy the rowme of a Superintendent or an Apostle.

These thynges wyte I vnto the, trustyng to come shortly vnto the: but and yf I tary longe, that then thou mayest perhaue knowledge howe thou oughtest to behaue thy selfe in the house of God, whiche is the congregation of the luyng God, the pillar and grounde of truth. And without doubt great is that mystery of godlynes: God was shewed in the fleshe, was iustified in the spirite, was sene amonge the angels, was preached vnto the Gentiles, was belieued on in earth, and receyued by in glory.

The text.

These thynges wyte I vnto the, derely beloued son, not as though I thought I should not come vnto you agayne, but my trust is that I shall shortly come agayne to see youre congregacion. Neuertheles in case any thing chaunce that I be enforced to be longer ere I come, than I trust I shall, myne entente was to admonyssh thee in the meane season by my letters, that thou shouldest not be ignorant, howe to behaue thy selfe, not in the Jewes temple, but in the house of God. For why shoulde not I thus call the Christian congregacion which is consecrated and dedicated vnto the luyng God, and shall neuer be destroyed with any stormes of errours and persecutions, inasmuche as it is the pylle and sure post of the trueth. The temple of Jerusalem had in tymes past his maner of veneration, it had his prestes, it had his rites and sacrifices. But this is a temple much moze holy than it, that keepeth not misteries in couerte with shadowes and figures: but for the Cherubin, for the Dome granates, for the Welles, for the Arke, and for suche like figures, it sheweth vs playnly the whole summe and perfite trueth of the gospel. Therefore maruaile not, though thou hearest nothyng prescribed herein, what maner thynges Moyles appointed with greate diligence vnto the leuites and prestes. For there is no cause why we should passe vpon those shadowes, in asmuche as God hath made the thyng playnly open vnto vs, for whose sake all that mysticall furniture was ordained for a tyme. And there is no cause why the Jewes should haue in admiration or byagge of the Arke or of anye thyng that had the mooste holye thynges called *sancta sanctorum* locked in it, if they be compared with the misteries that we haue. And whether their hydde secretes deserue any speciall prerogatyue of worshyp, or not, leat them see them selues. Certes this misterie of the ghospelles godlynes, is out of all controuerse, whiche maketh vs once free from all maner of supersticion: and in this temple is the greatest thyng of all other that is openly declared through the whole vniuersall worlde. In dede there is no shewing of the table or of the Arke or of sacrificed beastes, but Christe himselfe is shewed and preached, whiche beyng before tyme vnknewen and not passed vpon, is now become so manifestly open, that he is playnly seen to be a man after the fleshe, and handled of men, and after the spirite hath receyued so great power, that hauing done awaye the synnes of all men, hath throughly onely farthe geuen and doeth geue the righteousnes, that the lawe was not hable to geue. And this misterie of ours is so openly manifested, that it was wonderfull euen in the eyes of Angelles, that song glory to God on hygh, and peace vpon earth, and vnto men a good wyll. All other misteries cease to be of any worshyppe yf they be published: but as for this mysterye it is preached openly not onely to the Jewes but also to the Gentyles.

And the

## The paraphrase of Erasmus upon the first Epistle

And the preaching thereof was not vnfrutefull: For the thyng that seemed to all men agaynste the ordre of nature, that no philosophie or mannes eloquens was hable to perswade, the same did the simple playne preaching of the gospel perswade to all the whole world, with myraculous wondres witnessynge the same. Finally after his death vpon the crosse, he rose agayne to lyfe by his owne power, and beyng openly accompanied with Angelles he ascended into the heauens, and shewed vs vndoubtedly whether all oure hope oughte to be addressed. What is moze holy than thys mysterie? What is moze excellent? what is moze certayne or euident? This thyng yf we truely beleue, this thinge yf we worthily spue, for what purpose should we respecte from henceforth vnto Jewyshe constitutions? We haue the misterie of true godlynes, why doo we than stypppe backs vnto those thynges that haue moze supersticion than godlynesse? In case we be laden with synnes, here is the mooste assured rempyson of synnes. If we requite learnyng, here is the rule of true godlynes that we ought to folowe, yf we loke for rewarde, here is immortallite, wherunto we maye be exalted. Therfore leat vs be contented (my Tymothee) with this restypon, and take our leaue of the Jewes vayne prescripcions,

### The.iiii. Chapter.

The text.

The spirite speaketh euidently, that in the latter tymes some shall departe from the sayth, and shall geue hede vnto spirites of errour, and denythe doctrines of them which speake false showe ipocrisy, and haue theyr consciences marked with an hote yron, for biddinge to mary, and commanding to abstayne from meates which god hath created to be receaued with geuyng thanks, of them which beleue, and knowe the truth. For all the creatures of god are good and nothyng to be refused, yf it be receaued with thankes-geuyng. For it is sanctified by the word of god and prayer. If thou put the bierchen in thy remembraunce of these thinges, thou shalt be a good mynster of Iesu Christ, which hath ben nourished by in the wordes of the sayth and of good doctrine, whiche thou hast continually folowed. But cast away vngodly and olde wyces fables.

**T**hese thynges doe I beate in with so muche the moze studious diligence as I moze dyede peryll, whiche is not nowe gathered by doubtful coniectures, seying the spirite himselfe foreknowyng thynges to come doeth clerely and certaynlye spyngyng by them whom he hath inspired, that in the later tymes some shall spring by, whiche shall departe from the spycertie of sayth that the ghospell teacheth and styde backe vnto a certayne Jeweship, and repose the chief principle of godlynes in those thynges, that doo not onely nothyng auayle vnto godlynes at all, but also doo many tymes hurte: and beyng rebelles agaynst the spirite of Christe, shall rather take hede to deceayung spirites, and beyng turned awaye from the doctrine of the true God, shall geue theyr eares and myndes to the doctrine of deuylls, that in outward shewe of feyned godlynes, shall speake those thynges, that are cleane contrarie to the truth of the ghospell, and shall set out the selues in the syght of the simple people in outward apperaunce of holynes, where as in the syght of God they haue an vncleane conscience, defyled and marked and pynted with many markes of worldely lustes. Those maner of men, where as they swymme inwardly in malicious rancoz, hatred, couetousnes, ambition and other diseases, that are

that are cleane contraryly repugnaunt vnto true godlynes, yet for that to the intent they maye with a certayne newfangled wondrefull doctrine byng them selues in opinion of godlynes, they shall (after the Essenes example) forbiddē lausful marriage, as though wedlocke being chastye kepte were not honorable befoze god and the bedde vndefyled: and they shall requyre to be esteemed for goddes because they liue single, vnmarried, being neuertheles infected with innumerable pessilent vices: & are not so free from fylthye luste as from wyces. They shall also goo about to drawe men backe agayne to make differēce of meates, after the maner of the Jewes, as though the meate it selfe had some impuritie in it, where as God hath ordayned all kyndes of meates to thys ende, that we shoulde vse them temperately to the necessarye reliefe of oure bodye, and to kepe vp the strength with all, thankinge hym for hys gentilnes, as many of vs as haue embraced the fayth of y<sup>e</sup> Gospel in stēde of Moses law, and haupng wpped awaye the mystes of Jewyshe supersticions are broughte to the lycht of the truerh, knowynge that whatsoeuer is created of almyghtye God, is of it owne nature good, yf a man vse it as it oughte to be, and to that eude that it was created for.

There is no kynde of meate to be abhorred or refused, that is receyued as Goddes bounteous gyfte with thankes geuing. Thys is a Jewyshe maner of sayeng and not a Christian: Eate not this meate, touche not thys bodye, weate not this garment, to daye do not this thyng nor that thyng. There is no creature impure or vncleane, yf the conscience of hym that vseth it be pure and cleane. And albeit there were any impuritie in the meate, yet with himnes wherwith the larges of god is prayesd befoze meate and with holy wordes and prayers it shoulde be made holy and pure, that befoze was vncleane. Those maner of bayne smokes are blowen vnto the people by suche as occupye Christes bulines vnfaythfully, yea rather go about their own gayne. But see that thou auoyde suche maner of trybles, and teache the byethren those thinges, that thou hast learned of me, and playe the good and byrght minstre of Christe, disposing entierly and faythfully his doctrine, that is sette dyfferent fro these mennes prescribed appoyntementes. And thus it standeth the in hande to doo so muche the rather bycause thou art called to be a teacher of the Ghospel being not yet of full growen age, whiche is not wonte easlye to swerue in to newe fangles, but thou hast ben brought vp (as it were) euen from thy youth in the fayth of the ghospell and in good learning, so as thy contynuaunce ought to make the moze practised & strong: and thou canst not chose but be lyke thy selfe in that thyng that thou hast hitherto constauntly folowed. Therefore see thou teache thys doctrine worthy the ghospell vnto those that thynne are. But as for other mennes fables and bayne olde wyces tales (which as unpertinent to the misteries of the Euaungelicall fayth I myght ryghely cal lewde tales) reiecte them, & rather applye thy selfe to y<sup>e</sup> exercise of true godlines, than to contende in woordes with the mosse bablyng and most frowarde kynde of men that is.

Exercise thy selfe rather vnto godlynes. For badely exercise profyterh lytell: but godlynes is profytable vnto all thynges, as a thyng which hath promyses of y<sup>e</sup> lyfe that is now, and of the lyfe to come. Thys is a sure sayunge, and by all meanes worthy to be allowed. For: therefore we labour and suffer tribulys, because we beleue in y<sup>e</sup> lypynge God, which is the saluour of all men, specially of those that beleue. Such thinges commaund and teache. Let no man despise thy yowth, but be vnto them that beleue, an ensample in wordes.

The text.



## The paraphrase of Erasmus vpon the first Epistle

woꝛde, in conuersacion, in loue, in sꝑꝑꝛit, in sayth, in purenes.

True godlynes, that is placed inwardly in the mynde, can not possiblye be dyspned nor sufficiently prescribed with externe grosse matters. For fasting or choise of meates and suche other lyke, albeit they seme somtyme to be somewhat profitable for the tyme and place, in that they prepare the bodye to the dedes of godlynes, yet that profitablenes is nether perpetual nor of so weighty auaille, if it be compared to the inward godlynes of the soule: but rather of suche maner of obseruations springeth almoste the popson of true and tyghte godlynes. fasting is profitable in place, and contrariwise the same otherwise is pestiferous. To some man watching is holsome, and to some it is deadly and hurtfull. Some tyme it is good to passe ouer the Sabbath daye with rest from labour. And on the contrarye soyte a thyng maye be, wherein it were wickedly done to be ydle, whan a mannes neighbours nede requireth the dede of charitie. But the godlynes that the ghospell teacheth, whiche is grounded vpon a syncrete saythe and a true charitie, is profitable in euery tyme and in euery parte of a mans life, and it declareth in a bryefe summe, what so euer thing is to be desired either in the lyfe presente, or to be hoped for in the lyfe to come so muche that it is not necessarpe for vs to like for anye succour by anye other meanes. The thyng that I saye is true and vndoubted, and playne, worthy to be receaued of all men. We teache out of all peraduentures that we bothe sele it, and that it is no fable whiche we speake of, Or elles what thyng coulde persuade vs willingly and gladly to suffer the sorowes of this lyfe, to beare with a hartie stomacke punishmentes done vnto vs by the wicked, enprismentes and deathes, onles that we hope after the heauenlye succour in this woꝛde, and after this life immortalitie. And thys hope we haue fixed not in sholes or any other man that myght sayle our hope, but in the spuyng God, whiche can helpe euen the that are deade, & of who saluation procedeth vnto all the vntersall kynde of men, but especyallye vnto suche as haue embraced the faith of the ghospell. These thynges commaunde and teache constanlye and holdelpe, so as thou mayest shewe in thy selfe the auozitte of a Bpshoppe, beynge assured that this doctrine proceded from Christ him selfe. There is no cause why thou shouldest be afrayed in that thou art but a yonge man, although in a matter of so weightie importaunce: or why thou shouldest geue place to the stowardnes of them that teache contrarpe doctrine. Let humanitie be shewed in other matters, but in this case where perill of saluation is in daungier, auozitte muste be used. It is not to be respected, howe many yeares thou hast lyued, but what office thou bearest. He is an olde man, whosocuer he be that leadeth an entier vpyght life, and who so euer he be that sheweth a grauie of maners. There is no peryll, that anye man wyl contemme the because thou arte but a yonge man, in case thy lyfe and doctrine be suche that those whiche professe Christe, may see therein the example of ghospellike godlynes. In case they shal perceue in all thy communication the image of an holye conscience, in case they shall espie in the comen trade of thy lyfe modestie and purenes, in case in thy deutie doing they perceue a charitie worthy a bpsnop, yf in thy suffering of sorowes they see thy mynde stedfastly to trust in God: fynallye yf they shall see the in all poyntes voyde from humanie lustes, they shall soone reuerence the as though thou haddest bene an olde man long agoe.



¶ If I come, geue attendaunce to readyng, to exhortacion, to doctrine. Despyse not the gyfte that is in the, which was geuen the thowow prophete, with the layng on of handes by the auctorite of presbode. These thinges exerceyse, and geue thy selte vnto them, that it maye be sure, howe thou profyttest in all thinges. Take hede vnto thy selte, and vnto teachynge, and continue therein. No: yf thou shalt so do, thou shalt saue thy selte, and them that heare the.

The text

I truste in thoyte space to see thee, and to helpe the not, onely with my counsailes but also with my dedes. In the meane tyme whan I am absent geue dyligent attendaunce to thynne offyce, so muche the moze that thou mayest supplie my parte as well as yf I were there. In stedd of my sayinge see thou vie readynge of the holy scripture, and accoꝝdyng to it teache yf any thing be amysse: after it exhorte thou, yf thou see any not well occupied. These are the principall poyntes of a bysshoppes offyce. It behoueth thee to be answerable vnto the offyce that thou hast taken in hande, whiche was not committed vnto the without aduysment, after the maner as some make them selues Apostles and Elders. It was not ambicion noꝝ the fauour of men, but the spirite of god signifieng goddes will by the mouthes of the prophetes, that appointed the to that offyce: and than the auzoritie of the Elders incontinently with layng on of handes vpon the, committed the rowme of a Byshop vnto the. To be byefe, it is goddes gyfte, that thou arte instructe with these excellent gyftes, whiche declare thee woꝝthye of this honoure. Therfoze, two maner of charges thou art charged withall: bothe that thou shouddest be answerable to the goodnes of god, and to the auzoritie committed vnto thee. To professse Christ, is not an ydle noꝝ a delcatede finefyngred matter: it requireth watching; attendaunce, and dilygent cōtinuance. Wherfoze loke that thou foꝝecaste these thinges, in these thinges continue, these thinges applye continually, that bothe by thy lyunge and teachinge, euery man maye see the people waxe bettre and bettre. first of all, be thou thy selte as it behoueth the to be, and than thy godly life shal aduance thy godly doctrine, specially yf thou do it constantly and continually without synkyng. For trueth endureth foꝝ euer: countrefaicting lasteth but foꝝ a time. In case thou accōplyshe these thinges, thou shalt receyue double frute, fyrst thou shalt saue thy selte foꝝ vprightlye vsyng the office cōmitted vnto the: than thou shalt saue them also, that take hede vnto thy teachinge. Those that teache rightly and lyue wickedly, lyke as they may be profitable vnto others, so vndoubtedly they are hurtfull vnto them selues. But he, whose lyfe and doctrine bothe, is corrupte, is hurtfull two maner of wayes: he purchaceth vnto him selte damnacion, and ledeth other in to destruction.

The. v. Chapter.

¶ Rebuke not an elder: rigorously but exhorte him as a father: yf yonger as byethen y elder women, as mothers: the yonger as systers, with all purties. Honour wyddowes which are true wyddowes. If any wyddowe haue children or newes, let them learne first to rule their owne houses godly, and to recompense their elders. For that is good & acceptable before god. She that is a true wyddowe and frendelesse, putteth her trust in god, and continueth in supplicacions and prayers nyght and daye. But she that trusteth in pleasure, is dead, euen yet aloue. And these thinges commaunde, that they maye be

The text

## The paraphrase of Erasmus vpon the first Epistle

without rebuke. But yf any proude not for his owne (and specially for them of his house) the same hath denyed the sayth, and is worse then an infydeil.



Albeit a mā must neuer thinke from þe vpright sinceritie of doctrine. yet to heale the thinges that are amysse in a mā, it is not a lytell auayleable for a teacher or an admonysher to vse a softe temperaunce. For the autoztie of a byshop must be holden vpon so, as neuertheles he maye be quyte without all apperaunce of tyrannye, and that he maye appeare in euery condicion, that he doeth the thing that he doeth, to thentent to doe good and not of dyspleasre.

Therefore as many as thou canst byynge to amendement with lenitie and gentilnes, it is not expedient to enforze them with rigozous sharpenes. For a man doeth easlype after him that admonysheth him, yf he perceauē him selfe to be loued of him that monysheth him. And suche is almost the dysposicio of mans wytte, that he had leauer be ledde by faire meanes than constrayned parforze: and many tymes thinges are obtained by faire speche, that a man cannot bying to passe with crueltie. So that the electuarie of reprechyng muste be tempered accoꝝdyng to the age and state of euery one. And foras muche as it is allowed not onely among all wel manered nacions but also euen in the congregacions, þe for sage wyldooms sake & for the vse of thinges & also for restraynyng the wantonnes of youthe, autoztie shoulde be comitted vnto þe auncientes: in case an elder chaunce to offende, in any thinge, thunder not at him with cruell woꝝdes vpon any suspicio or infoꝝmacion, lest too quicke admonicio exclude þe fruite required in adimonicio. For it wylde be a double griepe, yf the adimonicio be bothe checking & pꝛocede fro a yong mā. But rather obserue þe reuerence of his age, & exhoꝝte him so, as þe woldest admonyshē thy father yf he dyd amysse. The yongmen also (bycause thou thy selfe arte a yong man) monyshē as byethen: and towarde them corꝛeccion ought to be moze frelye practised, but yet none otherwyse than maye stande with charitie. Adimonishe the olde women w moze reuerence and gentler woꝝdes euen as mothers, and beate with their age. The yong women coꝛrecte louinglye as systers: and behaue thy selfe so with all men, as thou runne into no synistre suspicio eyther of couetousnes or of vnchastenes, eyther of flatterie or of crueltie. Howe þe wydowes must also haue their honour, but namely those, that are wydowes not in tittle but very widowes in dede: that is to saye, those that beynge lefte comfoꝛtles without husbāde and chyldꝛen lyue after suche sorte, as they maye for their desertes woꝝthylye be refreshed of the congregacions helpe: the releyse wherof ought to be bestowed not to mayntene delycatenes but to refreshē myserable necessities. But in case any be so lefte wout an husbāde that she hathē chyldꝛen or chyldꝛens chyldꝛen, there is no cause why she shoulde (as though she were succourles) runne to be founde of the congregacion: Inas muche as she hathē them at home to fynde her a lyuinge as well as she had an husbāde, and suche as she oweth duetie vnto. Let her not therefore deꝛyꝛate her selfe to serue the congregacion, befoꝛe that she haue shewed a speciall token of godlynesse towarde her owne famylye. For it muste nedes be out of oꝛdꝛe, that the duetie of godlynes in the pꝛetense of the congregacion shoulde refuse to doe the bounden duetie of nature. For nature commaundeth vs to requite mutual good turnes to our parentes, being now destitute and decayed for age, seynge we had oure begynnynge of lyfe of them.

And

And in case death haue taken them away from vs, it shalbe conuenient for vs to transpose that duetie vpon our childezen and childezens childezen: and them it is our duetie to enforme after suche sorte, as they maye learne also in their duetie againe to releue suche as dyd them good. This thing not onely the sense of nature doeth allowe, but also it is so great and acceptable befoze the sight of god, that those wydowes are double synners, that are not onely rebelles vnto God, but also are deafe whan they shoulde heare the commune iudgement of nature, with the whiche euen those, that haue no knowledge of God, are moued. But a man wyll saye, who is a true wydowe thā? yf this wydowe be not: Doubtles she that beyng destitutely lefte without comfozte of husbände, of childezen, of childezens childezen, of all the woꝝldes solace, hath reposed all her whole hope in god, and now loketh no moze to be maryed, ne hunteth after any voluptuous pleasures, but hath dedycated her selfe wholly to god, after the exsample of the wydowe Anna, geuyng her selfe to prayers night and daye. She it is, that is woꝝthy to be comforted and refreshed of the congregacion, whiche hath nowe nothinge a doe with the woꝝlde. For a wydowe, that so absteyneth from beyng maryed againe, that she maye moze frelye pampze her selfe in delectiousnes, liueth not in dede. For she lyueth so to voluptuousnes, that she is deade vnto Chryste, vnto whome none lyueth onles he lyueth a godlye lyfe. Se thou commaunde them therfoze, that yf they loue wydowheade, they doe so behaue them selues in it, so as they geue none occasion vnto any man to suspecte euyl, as though they be lothe to marye againe not for loue of chastitie, but to lyue moze at libertye beyng free from the subiectiō of a husbände, and to take their ease at their owne pleasure. But vpon what purpose euery wydowe cholet to contynue in her wydowheade, or after what sorte she ledeth her life at home, leaue that to y iudgemente eallys owne conscience. To be dysce, yf any woman in pretence of wydowheade, runne to the congregacion in suche wyse, that she geueth ouer the care of her childezen, or childezens childezen, or suche as otherwyse belong vnto her famylie, her I thynke all together not onely vnwoꝝthy the byshoppes sauour, but also I iudge her rather to be accompted among those, that denyed y saythe of the gospel, and be woꝝse than y Ethnikes, by so mutche, as it is moze haynous to forlake the profession that a man hath taken vpo him, than not to haue professed it. Hath not she denyed the saythe, that abuseth the pꝛetense of the faith, to doe the thinges that are repugnaunt to the doctrine of the gospel? Crueltye in her dedes she openly denyeth it. And in this behalfe she is doubtles to be accompted among y heathen women, that they, where as they be straungers from Chryst, doe by the onely gouernatrice of nature beare y charge of their families: And this maner of wydowe, that was bounden accoꝝdyng to the charitie of the gospel to be good to cuery bodie to the vttermost of her power, withdraueth her bounden duetie euen from them of her owne householde, and is not allured by the godlynes of the gospel, to doe y thing, that the prophane & vngodly women doe thꝛough the affection of nature. What soeuer sedes of vertue, nature hath engraffed, the gospels doctrine taketh them not away, but setteth them foꝝwarde and maketh them perseute.

Let no wyddowe be chosen vnder thꝛescore yere olde, and suche a one as was y wyfe of one man, and well reported of in good woꝝkes: yf she haue brought by childezen, yf she haue lodged straungers, yf she haue washed the launcets feete, yf she haue ministered vnto them which were in aduersyte, yf she haue bene continually geue vnto al maner of good woꝝkes.

The texts.

## The paraphrase of Erasmus vpon the first Epistle

The ponger wydowes refuse. For whan they haue begon to were wanton against Christ, they wyl mary, haungyn dāpnacion, because they haue cast away their first faith. And also they learne to goe from house to house ydle: yee, not ydle onely, but also trippage & bely- bodyes, speakynge thinges whiche are not comly. I wyl therfore that the ponger women mary, so beare children, to gyde the house, and geue none occasion to the aduersarye to speake euyl. For many of them are alreadye turned backe, and are gone after Satan. And yf eny man or woman that beleueth haue wyddowes, let them ministrate vnto thē, and let not the congregacion be charged: that there maye be sufficient for them that are wyddowes in dede.

This is a thinge that vtterly belemeth the gentylnes of the Christian religion, to chearyshe and loupnglye to susteyne those women that are comfortlesly lefte destitute: howbeit I would not that should be done rashely and without aduysment, lest there ensue a double incommoditie, as well in that the congregacion is burthened aboue their habilitie, and the entretaynement bestowed vpon them is not worthye. To be bypese, in chosynge of wyddowes, two thinges are chiefly to be respected, the age, and the former spent lyfe, lest whan they be ones entretayned into the syndynge of the congregacion, they retorne afterwarde againe vnto mariage with a great deale of shame. And as for the age it is an easye mattier to decerne it. Let none therfore be chosen to be a wyddowe vnder thre scoze yeares olde: forasmuche as that age ought not in the clergye to be suspecte of incontinencie, and sheweth good hope, that they wyl not luste to be married againe. Neuertheles that age is not all together throughe to be trusted, onles it be approued by former conuersacion of lyfe befoze. So that it is to be marked, whether she haue bene content with one husbāde. (For some euen in their olde age are not all together voyde of incontinencie). And whether she haue with her good dedes gotten her selfe an honest estimacion with all folkes: whether she haue behaued her selfe vprightlye and godlye in <sup>ag</sup>ingngge vpon her children: whether she haue to her smal power ben herbetous to the sainctes, lodged them and washen their fete. (For these maner of offices, euen suche as be but of smal habilitie, are hable to doe.) And whether she haue releued with her substaunce those that were afflicted and pzed with extreme pouertye. To be byese, whether she haue left no good dede vndone for lacke of her dilygence. For it is reason that the congregacion shoulde receyue in to their keepynge a woman that hath so deserued, whiche afore tyme hath with her well doynge thus gon about, that she myght be allowed perpetuallie to be a mynistrice vnto the congregacion. fynallye, see thou receyue not the ponger wyddowes, nor those that be of a suspecte age. It is bettre not to take the professiō of wyddowhead, than to geue it ouer whā it is taken. The bowe of continencie is not to be committed vnto fraile slipperye age, namely in that kynde. In case chastitie lyke them, let them trye at home what they can doe. And yf they can not awaye with all there, they maye lawfully without reproche flee to the remedye of wedlocke. But we haue learned by playne experyence that whā the ponger wyddowes vpon a certayne loue of chastitie for a tyme, folowynge eyther ydlenies parchaunce or the honour of the title, haue addicte them selues vnto the congregaciō, & forsaking the libertie of marieng againe, haue consecrated them selues vnto Christ to be their spouse, by & by whā their olde lust pricketh them, they were wyld & wantō to the reproche of Christ, whose yoke they are desyous to cast of, & take againe the yoke of mariage. And in their so doing, they drawe vpon theyr owne selues this blotte



of infamye, because they haue made frustrate the saythe that they seme to coue-  
 nant vnto Christ, and so they are to blame twoo maner of wayes: bothe in that  
 they toke the profession of chastitie vnauidedlye, not hauynge sufficientlye  
 tryed their strengthes, and in that they lepe backe from it whan they had taken  
 it. And albeit it fortune not them openly to marye againe, yet verilye they lyue  
 synge after suche sorte that they are a slander to the congregaciō. And better  
 it were for them to be holden vnder at the commaundement of a husbände, and  
 to be occupped in charge of householde, than vnder pretence of wydowhead to  
 sinne moze licenciouslye. For this they are taught of idleness, & inasmuch as they  
 haue naught to doe at home, they strave aboute to other folkes houses, wher as  
 it is shame for a wydowe to walke ydle abroade openly, or to other mens houses.  
 Now they are not onely ydle, but also babling tale tellers & curious hearkeners.  
 For bablyng & curiositie are accustomed to cōpany together. For in pretence of  
 widowhead & setting out of þe professiō, it is an easye matter for them to cpepe in  
 to other mennes houses, & there seke out secretes whiche they afterwarde clatte  
 out to other, shamefully chattering of marriage, of contencion, of the naughty-  
 nes & abominacion done in other mens householdes. For these causes sake, I  
 holde it surely better, that the yonger wydowes be rather married to husbādes,  
 by auozitie wherof bothe the weaker sexe & the weaker age maye be gouerned,  
 and that they applye them selues to byng for the chylzen, and take charge of  
 householde rather thā in doyng nothing encombre other mennes householdes.  
 For euen as to stande in awe to the husbāde restrayneth the licenciousnes of  
 the sexe and the age, euen so the charges of householde geue them not free lea-  
 sure to meddle of those thinges that they haue naught to doe withall. To con-  
 clude let them orde their conuersacion by all meanes so, as there be none occa-  
 sion of fallynge into manifest reproche, and so as none occasiō be geue to Sa-  
 tan to bewraye and slander our lyfe by, vnto the enemyes of Christes profes-  
 sion. I say not naye, but I might seme to caste ouer muche doubte in this be-  
 halfe, but that the myseliefe it selfe teacheth vs thus to beware. For we would  
 not be so narrowlye afrayed, lest any suche thing shoulde chaunce, excepte we  
 had al readye sene them chaunce ofrener than once. The examles of some wo-  
 men fraye vs, who, whan they are once cholen into the succoure of the congre-  
 gacion, are overcome with lustes, and seruyng Satan are stypped backe  
 and married againe. And albeit lacke of ioynter be the lette, that a wydowe  
 (whose age requireth to be married) can not fynde an husbāde, it nedeth not at  
 all, that for pouerties sake, she shoulde take the profession of chastitie. For suche  
 widowes warrtes ought to be releued of her kynfolkes gentyll lyberalitie, in  
 case she haue any, either men or womē that professe them selues christians. For  
 it is no reason, that a Christen man or a christe woman, whose godlynes ought  
 to succoure euen them that are foryners, shoulde suffre his owne kynswoman  
 widowe to be leste succourles, and put her to be kept of the congregacions cost,  
 whiche yf it be burthened with euery wydowe, it shall come to passe, that whan  
 the stocke is spent by, there shall not be ynough to kepe those that are true wy-  
 dowes in dede, who are the owners of this telyfe and haue none other succoure  
 to lyue vpon.

The elders that rule well are worthy of double honour, most specially they which lab-  
 our in þe worde & teaching. For þe scripture saith: thou shalt not mouel þe mouthe of þe one  
 that

The text.

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that treadeth out the corne . And the labourer is worthy of his rewarde. Against an elder receaue none accusacion, but vnder two or thre wytnesses. Them that spure, rebuke openly, that other also maye learne.

Elders, as  
we in our  
commen  
speche vse  
to cal them,  
Aldermen.

But lyke as the widowes that haue thus deserued oughte to be honoured accordyng to their porcion, euen so the Elders are muche more plentiuously to be mayntened, which with the grauittie of their maners, whiche with their auncient wysedome, whiche with their vprightenes of lyfe, whiche with thautozitie of their age, gouerne well the multitude, that is to saie, playe the ryght Elders in dede, who aswell for their age as godlye demenour deserue worthylye to be kept from nedynes . For so shall they more quietly gouerne the people, & ha-uyng wherof to lyue cleane vpon, their autozitie shall not be contemned. Fewerthelesse these maner of releues ought mooste specially to be bestowed vpon them, that are lanternes vnto the people, not onely in vprightenes of lyfe, but also labour in dyspensyng the worde of the gospel, and holy doctrine, inas- muche as that is the chiefe office and aboue all other mooste holisome vnto the Christian flocke . In dede they loke for an higher rewarde, but yet it is some parte of comfote in the meane season, yf some frute come presentlye again vnto them in those their labours, not to be riche withall but to lyue vpon. And it is against right to requyte nothing of transpoyte thinges and thinges of small worthe vnto him that geueth a thinge of sette greater pryce . The labourer ought of ducyte to haue his lyuing, in somuche that Moses lawe forbiddeth the oxe mouth to be mouled, as long as he is occupied in treadinge out the corne. And doubtles it is more besydes humanitte to suffre him that trauaileth in the gospel preachinge to hungrer or thurst. He hunteth not after his hyre, but the workman is so muche the more worthy his hyre . It is to the commendacion of his godlynes yf he labour without hyre but for all that the people are in great faulte yf they grudge to releue the necessitie of him that deserueth good, and maye be succoured with a litell . Howeouer thou shalt geue this prerogatyue to the autozitie of the Elders, that thou receyue not lightly enformacion against them, of those whome it becommeth to stande in awe to them, lest a wyndowe be opened also vnto them, rashelye to depraue the lyfe of the Elders, against whome ther ought no light sinistre suspicio to be receyued, wherby their autozitie myght be dymynished . He ought not to be herde that maketh the in- formacion onles he proue his obiection with two or thre wytnesses. But in case it be to apparent and to muche playne, that it can not be cloked, but they haue offended, their correccion must be so moderated, that thou nether geue place to the accusours crueltie, ne yet that their escapyng without punishment minstre a pernicious example to the commen multitude. But reprove thou them with thine owne mouthe openly, that the rest maye be more in drede of a bysshoppes checke, yf they perceiue therby, that euen the elders be not pardoned, in case they doe any thinge worthy correccion.

The texte.

¶ Testifye before god and the Lord Iesus Christ, and the electe angels, that thou obserue these thinges without hastynesse of iudgement, and do nothinge partially. Laye handes soddely on no mā, ne yet be partaker of other mennes synnes: kepe thy selfe pure. Dryncke no longer water, but vse a lytell wyne for thy stomaches sake and thine often dyscaises. Some mennes synnes are open befoze hande, and goe befoze vnto iudgement: and some mennes synnes folow after. Epe myse also, good woordes are manifest befoze hande, and they that are otherwysse, cannot bee hyd.

¶ Phosane Judges are bounde by their phosane lawes in religion, that they be

be not corrupte with affections and so geue wronge iudgement. Howe muche more vprightenes becometh a Byshop either in iudgements, or in puttinge magistrats in office: They are monyshed of their othe, whan they shall sytte on gementes, and are astrayed with the religion of false goddes: But I charge the Timothy by God the father ( who beyng witnesse and autour, this matter is practised ) and by Iesus Chyriste, whose ministres we are, and by the electe angelles arbitrours and lokers on of those thinges that we goe aboute, that in practysynge of iudgements thou obserue those thinges that I prescribe vnto the, so as thou maiest come to the hearing of causes vprightlye and vncorruptelye, not byngynge the sentence with the, that fauoure or malpce or dyspleasure or any other affection hath secretlye sowked into thee, but of the thing selfe in dede knowen, takynge matter to geue right sentence of, declynynge nether to this parte nor that parte. This vprightenes it is necessarye to expresse, not onely in hearing of causes, but also in chosynge those men that thou comittest ecclesiasticall administracion vnto. For an hyghe speciall myschiefe springeth vnto Chyristian people of none other fountayne, than whan vnproffytable or elles pestilent hurtfull men be put in office. Therfoze laye not handes vpon any man without delyberate aduisement. It standeth the in hande to trye and searche that man muche and long, whome thou muste committe thaurortie of a byshop vnto, who yf he vse the honour committed to him otherwylse than he ought to doe, it shalbe imputed vnto thee, whatsoeuer he doeth amysse. For thou shalte seme to haue fauoured his naughtines seyng thou knewest him whan thou committedest suche a trauayle vnto him. But and yf he haue deceaied the, yet thou shalte not be hable to escape the blame-worthines of negligēce, by cause thou comitttedest so icoperdous a matter vnto one whome thou hadest not tryed. For it ought not to be ynoughe in chosynge of a byshop, though he be not euyl reported of, but it behoueth him to be excellentlye commended many wayes for his wel doinges. It is not ynoughe also for a byshop to set forthe his owne innocencie, but his duettie is also to make good the integritie of them whome he ordeyneth. In these thinges therfoze see thou kepe thy selfe chaste and pure vnto the Religion, wherof thou hast charge. Thy temperate diet is moze notably perceaued vnto me, than I nede to warne the from delicatenes. Howbeit this thou arte to be warned of, that abstinence ought so to be mesured, as the feblenes of the bodye be not suche, that it be not hable to goe aboute the offices of godlynes. Lyke as a fatte and vntreasonable lustye bodye dothe many tymes holde downe the soule from myndynge heauēly thinges; euen so sycklynes of bodye oftentymes hyndzeth the strength of the soule, that it can not expresse nor set forthe it selfe frely by workes of charitte. I thincke it therfoze ynough for the to haue kepte abstinence to this tyme hitherto. From henceforthe dryncke not water but vse rather moderate wyne. Concernynge thyne abstinence from wyne vnto this tyme, let that be practised by cause of the heate of thy freshe youthe; but now thy health must be loked vnto, that thou maiest be hable to accomplishe and doe all the partes of a byshop. The stomake is refreshed with moderate drynkyng of wyne, and with drynkyng of water it is chieflye decaved. To thentent therfoze thou mayest bothe helpe thy stomake, and fall seldomer in to sycklynes, than thou arte wonte to doe, vse wyne in stedde of medycne, lest afterwarde whan thy strenght is gone, thou be enforced to seke helpe of phisicians. But to retorne to the purpose that I nowe

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beganne, bycause thou shouldest not thinke that all the synnes of those that thyne are, shoulde be imputed to the, some mens synnes are so manifest, that they tary not the last iudgemēt of god, but runne befoze the iudgement of theyz owne swynge beyng damned by them selues befoze they be broughte in to that iudgement. For bothe the lyfe and doctrine of suche men dyffereth manifestlye from the doctrine of Christe. For in steade of gospellike godlynes they teache Jewyshe supersticion, and as for their lyfe, it is infecte with ambition, hastyng hande makynge, and other myscheuous desyres. As for these maner of men, lyke as thou mayest lawfully iudge of them, so must thou rendze accompte of them. Whoeuere some folkes naughtines is so closely hydden, that it can not be deprehended by mans iudgement, but is referued to the iudgement of god, wherin all thinges shalbe made naked, for those mens faulte thou shalt not be in daungier befoze god. In lyke case, some folkes good woꝝkes are so manifest, that they nede no commendacion of man. To suche therfoze shall euery man accompany himselte safely, lyke as he ought to absteyne from the companie of them that are openly wycked. Furthermore, those that ordze theyz lyfe with such subtiltye, and in outwarde shewe of godlynes dyssemble the maltyce of theyz harte after suche soꝝte that they deceaue the iudgement of man, those we wyll leaue to the iudgement of god. For chryistian godlynes is not ouer muche suspicious.

### The vi. Chapter.

The texte.

¶ Let as many seruauntes as are vnder the yoke, counte theyz masters worthy of all honour, that the name of god and his doctrine be not euill spoken of. Se that they which haue belouynge masters, despyse them not because they are brethren: but rather do seruyce, for asmuche as they are belouynge and beloued, and partakers of the benefyte.



Furthermore, it is not our parte to rebuke the lyfe of them, that are straungiers from the profession of Christ, it is rather requisite for vs to prouoke them vnto a better mynde with our good turnes, than to kyndle them with taunting checkes. Religion ought so to be ordzed, that it seme not to be occaslon of sowynge of sedicion. In suche affaites as we haue necessarlye to doe with the Ethnykes, let the perceaue by vs that we are become the moze diligente to doe good, bycause of religion, and not moze vnyofytable noꝝ moze ouerthwarte. For by that meanes they shalbe moze easylie allured into our felowshyp of religion. Therfoze as many as beyng bonde seruauntes haue obtyned Baptisme, let them remembre that they are set at lybertye by manumission from the lordshyp of synne and not made free from their masters right of auoytie. And therfoze it is not seemly that vpon trust of their profession they shoulde bystle againste their maisters, as wycked persons and vnwoꝝthe that a Christian shoulde doe seruyce vnto them. But let them onely consydeꝝe that they are their masters, and therfoze let them esteeme them worthy all honour, that the name of god and the gospels doctrine come not into an euill repoꝝte and hate, in case they shall perceaue men become throughe it the moze sturdy and moze vntactable. But let them rather be moze diligent in seruyce doyngge than they were afore, and moze glade to obeye as doyngge seruyce with a good wyll, that theyz maisters beyng prouoked with those thinges, maye the moze easylie receyue the gospel preaching. Than muche lesse ought those seruauntes, that haue Chry-

stian



stian maisters, to set lesse by them bicause, for þe profession of the commune faith, in stedde of maisters they are become brethren. But in asmuche as they withdrawe not their bounden duetie from Schrike maisters, it behoueth them to obey their Christian maisters for two maner of considerations. First in that they are their maisters, than in that they are felowes in religion, for skoute statelynes, rakyng loue: & for awful maisters, beginnyng to be beloued: and for thycatenyng maisters, become good maisters. For moze is to be done for þe deseruour than for þe exactour, moze for the louyng maister than imperious comaundyng maister. For þe is not properly a bondage but to doe one good turne for another.

These things teache & exhorte. If eny man folowe other doctrine, and enclpne not vnto the wholsome wordes of our Lorde Iesu Christe, and to the doctrine whiche is accordyng to godlynes, he is putt by, & knoweth nothing: but wasterh his byaynes aboute questions and streyfe of wordes, wherof spryngge enuy, streyfe, raylynge, cuyll surmysynges, wayne dysputacions of men that haue corrupte myndes, and that are robbed of the truth: whiche thincke, that lutce is godlynesse. From them þe are soche separate thy selfe. Godlynesse is great ryche: yf a man be content with that he hath. For we brought nothinge into the world, neether maye we carry any thing out. But when we haue fede and rayment we must therewith be content. They that wylbe ryche, fall into temptacion and snares of the deuyll, and into many folysh and nopsom lustes, whiche browne men into perdition and destruction. For couetousnes of money is the rore of all cuyll: whiche whyle some lusted after, they erred from the faith, and rangled them selues with many sorowes. But thou man of God, syle suche thinges. Folowe ryghte wysnes, godlynes, faith, loue, paciencce, meaknes. I syle the good syght of faith. Laye hande on eternall lyfe, wycruanto thou art also called, and hast professed a good profession befoze many witnesses.

The texts.

These things teache with autozitie: vnto these things exhorte them that be slacke. This doctrine is a true gospellyke doctrine, that maketh vnto godlynes of lyfe, & maketh vs bothe accepted of god and beloued of men. Yt any man byng in a contrarpe doctrine vnto this, and geueth not himselfe vnto the moost true wordes of the Lorde Iesu Christe, nor obeyeth vnto this doctrine whiche beynge agreable vnto the gospel calleth not men vnto superstitious questions but vnto offices of godlynes: suche one the lesse true knowledge he hath, the moze he taketh vpon him. For lyke as knowledge is a modest thinge, euen so there is nothing moze hyghe mynded or stubburne than folysh ignorance. And he þe is taken with that dyspleas, and is turned awaye from the sinceritie of the gospel, outrageth aboute trisyngge questions, without consideration of the lyfe, byauillyng with wordes, which are so lytel auayleable vnto true godlynes, þe they rather engendze a mischief of Christiã godlynes, bycause that of suche maner byablyng strifes arryseth enuy, whyle by dimynishyng of other mens autozitie we seke autozitie vnto our selues: There arysle also contentions, whylest by reason of hoot chiding wordes none wyl geue place vnto another: there arysle also scoldynges as often as the matre groweth in to outrage: there arysle also wycked suspicions against god, whã those thinges, that ought to be beleued without questyonyng, are called by humayne reasonynges in to question as doubtfull thinges. And many there be that as it were with a contagiousnes are infected with the rubbyng of this scabbe of men, whose myndes are infecte with naughtye couetous lustes, and beynge blynded therewith they see not the trueth of the gospel, nor conferte their doctrine to this ende, but rather they measure godlynes and religion by their owne gayne, and woulde haue the thing to seme moost holpe, not that maketh other men moze acceptable to God, but that can byng them selues to be best set by, & get them mooste auantage. But thou mayest not in any wyse thinke, þe those men can be ouercommen with

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any dysputaciōs. for lacke knowledge is a stubburne matter. And albeit they perceauē the trueth neuer so well, yet they acknowledge it not, by cause it is not for their profyte in comparison of the thing that they goe about for their owne purpose. Strive not therfore with them bothe out of fassion and in wayne to. But withdrawe thy selfe from their companie. Let them hunt after their pelfe, let them make marchandise of the gospelles doctrine. Unto vs it is a plentiful great gaignes, yf we maye waxe riche in godlynes, yf we maye waxe ryche in true goodes of soule, and be content with those thinges that suffice vnto þe necessitie of the lyfe present, inasmuche as our spedye iournaye is to the lyfe that neuer shall dye. It is a greate matter to heape vp those riches þe wyl neuer leaue vs. But to what purpose is it to carke & care to heape riches together, þe nother are ours, & we are by and by enforced to leaue them to others. For lyke as we brought none of them into þe worlde w̄ vs whā we were boyme, so shall we carpe nothing awaye with vs whan we dye. To spende ryches wastefully vpon pleasures it is a myschiefe, and to hoozde them vp it is a fonde folyshenes. As for vs, we measure the vse of suche thinges by the bondes of nature, and whan we haue competent wherwith to be clothed and fedde, we require no further. And a competent diet and clothing is easylie had euery where. For they are not to be had for excesse but for necessitie. A small thing easeth necessitie, but the gredynes of rotous excesse is insatiabie. It is a great winnyng, with þe losse of money to augment þe treasure of godlynes. And it is a great losse, for a lytel soye lucre to lose the riches of immortallitie. The care for riches and care for godlynes accordē not together in one. For whose hertes are once throughlye occupied with desyre to be ryche, are enticed to many fylthy matters, and fall in to inare and many couetous desyres, not onely folyshē but also noysome. For this couetous lustyng commeth not without companie, but bringeth a great rowte of myschiefes with her, pryde, dysdaine, ambition, violence, dysceate, inturie, riot, voluptuousnes and suche maner of other pestilences, whiche by lytell & lytell burthen a man, and dzowne him downe in to destruction and martyngē, so as now he shall not onely be to him selfe but also vnto other (that he hathē rule ouer) a destroyour and a marrer. The greater the honour is that he beareth, so muche the more fetter it behoueth him to be from the spiece of this myschiefe. The hyghest autozitie requireth the hyghest integritie. But nothings is throughlye byrightlye done, nothing is without corrupcion done of him, whosoeuer he be, that hathē auarice of his counsaile, whiche is so fette dysstaunte from honestye, that it is euen the roote and sede of all maner myschiefes, yea althoughe riches seme to beare a certaine wondrefull shewe of felycitie. Some men beyng cralled in this bayte, whyle they are griedie after riches, haue ben corrupte w̄ couetous desyres, and haue wandzed astraye from the synceritie of faythe that the gospel teacheth, setting befoze their eyes an other marke to shote at than Christe, and wher as they seeke to lyue pleasauntlye, they haue wrapped them selues in many sorowes, scapyng that with muche paynes þe they must kepe with muche care, and that, whiche yf it shoulde fortune to be taken from them, shoulde greuoulye wounde a couetous herte. These belonge to suche as haue dedycated themselves to the god of Pānon. But thou whiche arte consecrated vnto god, flee from these thinges þe are vnworthye thy professiō & folowe true riches, as righteousnes, godlynes, faythe, charitie, patience, mekenes. Ryghteousnes, to kepe þe safe withall from all maner of vices: godlynes, to loue god withall & thy neighbour

for goddes sake: Faith, wherwith (haupnge the helpe of god) thou shalt not be turmoped with care of suche thinges: charitie, to doe good vnto all mē withal: patience, wherby throughe hope of the immoztalitie to come, thou mayest con-  
 tynue stedfaste in aduersities and in stormes of persecucions: And meeknes, to beate gentlye the weakenes of other. These thinges can not the man possiblye kepe safe, that thinketh he must doe all thinges for ryches sake. As for the, thou hast taken vpon the an other maner of course. Thou arte entred an excellent great syght, not the syght of couetousnes but of saythe. And it is no small rewarde that is layed vpon for it. For this matre is not taken in hande by thee to be riche of momentanye and false seyned goodes here in this worlde, but to attayne lyfe euerlastyng. To this prycke, to this marke, preece thou withal diligent endeuour. To this marke, god (the true rewarde of thy trauayle) hath called the, which of his owne iudgement hath chosen thee to be a Bysshop ouer the people to the glozve of Christ. This, at the taking of the offyce of an Elder, thou dyddest professe and that befoze many wytnesses. Thy profession is of highe excellēte, but to frame thy selfe answerablye lyke vnto it, thou hast nede muche dyligentlye to watche aboute the. Albeit thou passe not muche vpon so highe a rewarde, yet passe vpon god the loker on, let the expectation of so many lokers on besyde moue thee, let the reuerence of so hyghe an offyce that thou hast taken in hande moue thee.

I geue the charge in the sight of god, which quickeneth all thinges, and befoze Iesu Christ (whiche vnder Poncius Pilate witnessed a good wytnessyng) that thou kepe the commaundement, and be without spot and vncorruptible, vntyll the apperyng of oure Lorde Iesus Christ, whiche apperyng (in his tyme) he shall shew, he is blessed and myghty onely, kyng of kynges, and lorde of lordes, whiche onely hath immoztalitie, and dwelleth in the lyght that no man can attayne, whome no man hath seene nether can se, vnto whome be honour and tute euerlastyng. Amen.

The text.

This I esteemes commaunde, and beseeche the by god the father, whiche is the autoz of lyfe vnto all men, and shall rayse the dead to the lyfe that neuer shall dye by his sonne Iesus Christ, whiche vnder the iudge Poncius Pilate shonke not from the offyce that he had receyued of the father, euen vnto the crosse, that thou so behaue thy selfe in the trauayle committed vnto thee, that thou geue occasyon to thy selfe of no blotte nor blame worthynes: and that see thou doe constauntly not onely vnto mans syght but muche rather lokyng for the commyng of oure Lorde Iesus Christe, whiche he shall shewe agayne vnto the worlde in his tymes, euen that blessed one and onely myghty kyng of kynges, and lorde of lordes, whiche onely hath immoztalitie of himselfe, whiche onely dwelleth in the lyght that cannot be atteyned vnto, whome no man hath yet seene, nor is hable to see. To him be honour & power world without ende. Amen. Suche excellēt autoz of thyne offyce he hath, he thou shouldest despaire nothing of thyne autozitie: Suche parfyt lokers on and iudges thou haste, that thou shouldest doe nothing otherwyle than thou oughtest to doe: Suche valeaunte protectours thou haste, that thou shouldest not dreade the stormes of mennes persecucions: Suche lyberall rewardours thou haste, that thou shouldest nothing doubte of he promysed rewardes. And vnto them all the glozve of he gospel is to be referred, that man shoulde not therof chalenge to hymselfe any prayse.

Charge them whiche are riche in this worlde, that they be not hie mynded, nor trust in vncerten riches: but in the luyng God, (whiche geueth vs aboutauntlye all thinges to enioye them) that they doe good: that they be riche in good workes: that they be readye to geue and gladlye to distribute, laynge vp in store for themselves a good foundation as

The text.



## The paraphrase of Erasmus vpon the first Epistle

gaina the tyme to come, that they maye obtayne eternal lyfe. ¶ Timothy, saue that which is geuen the to kepe, and a voyde vngodly vanities of voyces and oppolitions of science, falsly so called, whiche science whyle some professed, they erred as concerninge the faith. Grace be with the. Amen.

I haue declared, how perillous noysome a matter it is for them that professe Christ, to let their studie vpon riches. And yf there be among our sorte any, that haue chaunced vpon those riche substaunces, for the whiche this presente worlde reconeth men ryche and fortunat, and reuerenceth and honoureth them as halfe goddesses: commaunde them, that they be not (as the commune sorte is) hyghly mynded in trustyng vpon their ryches, nor that they repose their chiefe helping felicitie in thinges, that are sytthe vayne, than so incertain that yf casualtie take them not awaye, yet at lest death despatcheth vs from them. But let them rather trust surely in the luyngge god, that neuer forsokē me eyther quicke or dead, inasmuche as he is vnderchaungeable, of whose lyberalitie cometh whatsoever this worlde yeldeth vnto vs plenteously of yerelely reuenues, for oure present vse, and not to hoozde by riches. And let them rather conuerte their study to this ende, that they maye exercyse them selues vnto good woorkes, wherby they maye be made truly ryche, and let them be wealthe rather in good dedes than in lordely possessions: & that, that they haue, let them so possede, as though it were commune, and not their owne, and let them therewith be glad to geue vnto the nedye, and not dysdayne the rest that are but of small substaunce, and let them shewe them selues gentyll and frendly in the company and familiaritie of the commune sorte of lyfe. For wealthe hathe commonly these companions with her, dysdeyne & statelynes. Let them not put their trust in their gorgeous great buyldinges: for nothing in this world is longe durable. But rather with true vertues let them laye for them selues a stronge and a good foundation against the worlde to come. & they maye atteyne to the true lyfe, that is to saye, the lyfe that euer lasteth. For what other thing is this lyfe, than a race vnto death: we must laye all carefulnes of transitorie thinges asyde, and make spedye haste vnto it with all dyslygent studie. ¶ Timothy, I esteemes desyre & beseeche the agayne, kepe faithfully this doctrine, as it is committed vnto thee, and suffice it not to be despyed with humayne learnynges. And that thou canst not possiblye doe onles (as I warned the before) thou recte the chattering vayne byblestable of those men that goe about to byng them selues in a false estimacion of knowledge, by reason of humayne questions and sophistical quiddities: inasmuche as mans knowledge consistyng of opinions contrarye repugnaunt amonge them selues, is not woorthy to be called knowledge. We know nothynge moze certainlye than that, whiche the doctrine and belese of the gospel hathe perswaded vnto vs. Furthermoze some men, whylest they goe aboute to seme learned and wysse, throughe humayne reasons, throughe sophistical wragglinges, throughe new learnynges whiche they themselues haue deuyced, haue wandred astraye fro the sinceritie of the faythe of the gospel, whose propertie is, to beleue & not to dyspute, nor is caried awaye with mens decretes from the prescripte commaundementes of god. And to thintent thou mayest perceaue that this Epistle is not countrefaict, I wyll subscribe these wordes with myne owne hande that thou well knowest: Grace be with the. Amen.

Thus endeth the paraphrase vpon the  
first Epistle to Timothy.